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M^rs Bovi sculp^t

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE,
Earl of Orford.

From an Original Painting in Enamel by Zincke
In the Possession of the Hon^ble Mr^s Walpole.

Published Nov^r 2^nd 1797 by Cadell & Davies Strand.

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MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE AND ADMINISTRATION

OF

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE,

Earl of Orford,

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY

WILLIAM COXE, M.A. F.R.S. F.A.S.

RECTOR OF BEMERTON.

A NEW EDITION.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, JUN. AND W. DAVIES,
IN THE STRAND.

1800.

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"OMNIA PRIUS EXPERIRI VERBIS QUAM ARMIS SAPIENTEM DECET."

TERENCE.

"THE BLOOD OF MAN SHOULD NEVER BE SHED BUT TO REDEEM THE BLOOD OF MAN. IT IS WELL SHED FOR OUR FAMILY, FOR OUR FRIENDS, FOR OUR GOD, FOR OUR COUNTRY, FOR OUR KIND. THE REST IS VANITY, THE REST IS CRIME."

BURKE.

LUKE HANSARD, Printer,
Great Turnstile, Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

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TO THE

REV^D. HUMPHREY SUMNER, D.D. PROVOST,

AND TO THE

FELLOWS AND SCHOLARS

OF

KING'S COLLEGE

IN THE

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,

THESE

MEMOIRS OF SIR ROBERT WALPOLE,

(ONCE A SCHOLAR OF THEIR SOCIETY)

ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR,

WHO IS INDEBTED FOR HIS EDUCATION

TO THE

PIOUS MUNIFICENCE

OF

HENRY THE SIXTH.

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ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

OCTAVO EDITION.

MANY Perſons having expreſſed a deſire to purchaſe the Memoirs of Sir ROBERT WALPOLE *ſeparately from the Correſpondence, this Edition is preſented to the Public, without Augmentation or Abridgment.*

The References to the intereſting and important Collection of Papers are retained in this Impreſſion, becauſe the Authenticity of the Work depends principally on their Authority.

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PREFACE

TO THE

QUARTO EDITION.

IT is unneceſſary to offer an apology for ſubmitting to the Public, Memoirs of Sir ROBERT WALPOLE, which embrace a period ſo important in the annals of this country. It will be ſufficient to explain the motives which induced me to undertake this Work; to announce the plan; to ſtate the authorities from which the materials are derived; and to acknowledge obligations.

Nine years have elapſed ſince I undertook to write *The Hiſtorical and Political State of Europe*; the plan of which was printed, and ſubmitted to the public. In the proſecution of that work I obtained acceſs to various collections of original papers, particularly thoſe of the earls of *Hardwicke*, *Harrington*, and *Peterborough*, and of Sir *Benjamin Keene*. It was in ſuch forwardneſs, that the hiſtories of Spain, Portugal, Auſtria, the German conſtitution, Ruſſia, and part of Pruſſia and Sweden, were already prepared for the preſs; I

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had alſo ſketched the hiſtories of the Italian States, Holland, and France, and ſeveral maps were finiſhed. Finding it impoſſible to obtain in England ſufficient information reſpecting foreign countries, I viſited Germany in 1794, with a view to obtain an accurate knowledge of recent events.

On my return, I went to Wolterton, for the purpoſe of inſpecting the papers of Horatio lord Walpole, father of the preſent lord Walpole, whoſe intereſting correſpondence, during his embaſſies in France and Holland, were of the utmoſt importance to my undertaking. I employed ſeveral months in peruſing and arranging theſe papers. In the courſe of this occupation, I traced motives of action unknown to hiſtorians, which placed in a new light the foreign and domeſtic tranſactions of the cabinet. I alſo derived, from the converſation of lord and lady Walpole, many facts and anecdotes which elucidated the events adverted to in the papers.

The progreſs of the French revolution, and the uncertain poſition of Europe compelled me, notwithſtanding the expence and loſs of time and labour, to ſuſpend my original deſign, and to defer the completion of *The hiſtorical and political State*, till the return of more quiet and favourable times.

With the ſanction of lord Walpole, I propoſed, therefore, to give to the public a ſelection of his father's papers. In the courſe of this undertaking, I met with ſeveral letters and papers of Sir Robert Walpole, which made me ſolicitous to obtain

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tain farther information concerning his character and adminiſtration.

On my arrival in London, I had frequent converſations with the late earl of Orford, who related many anecdotes of his father, which led to further inquiries. It now inſenſibly became a part of my plan, to blend in the narrative as many particulars relating to Sir Robert Walpole as could be authenticated, and to inſert, in the correſpondence, as many of his letters as I could obtain.

This deſign was promoted by the kindneſs of lord Orford, who imparted to me all his father's papers which remained in his poſſeſſion, and permitted me to uſe them at my diſcretion, without the ſmalleſt controul.

The connection and friendſhip which, for a long period, had ſubſiſted between Sir Robert Walpole, and his brother-in-law Charles viſcount Townſhend, naturally ſuggeſted that the Townſhend papers muſt afford conſiderable information.

The acquiſition of theſe important documents, led to the diſcovery and communication of others, particularly in the *Hardwicke*, *Grantham*, *Waldegrave*, and *Poyntz* collections.

With theſe ſources of information, the work gradually expanded, and Sir Robert Walpole from being a ſecondary, became the principal object. I therefore interrupted the impreſſion of lord Walpole's correſpondence, and poſtponed that publication. I determined to give to the world—The MEMOIRS of the LIFE and ADMINISTRATION of SIR ROBERT WALPOLE, drawn from theſe copious

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pious and original ſources, and to illuſtrate, by intereſting and authentic documents, the tranſactions of the buſy and eventful period, in which that miniſter acted ſo conſpicuous a part.

In the execution of this extenſive plan, I found myſelf under the neceſſity of diſcuſſing the intereſts of Great Britain and of Europe, of developing the intricacies of cabinets, of tracing motives of action, of delineating characters, and diſcriminating the views of diſcordant politics.

Anxious to avoid an error, too common with biographers, of conſidering only one ſide of the queſtion, I was no leſs ſolicitous to procure the papers of thoſe who oppoſed, than of thoſe who ſupported the meaſures of Sir Robert Walpole. With this view I obtained communications of the *Stanhope*, *Middleton*, *Melcombe*, and *Egremont* Papers. Theſe I have printed with out interpolation and without diſguiſe, not omitting a ſingle invective, but leaving the reader to judge between the partial eulogiums of Hervey, and the acrimonious reproaches of Bolingbroke.

The Plan of this work is to give an uninterrupted narrative of the life and adminiſtration of Sir Robert Walpole, illuſtrated by original correſpondence and authentic papers.

The Memoirs, which are contained in the firſt volume, are divided into eight periods, comprehending a term of ſixty-nine years, from his birth in 1676, to his death in 1745.

The correſpondence, which occupies the ſecond and

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and third volumes, is, for facility of reference, alſo divided into eight periods, applying to the ſubjects of the correſponding periods in the narrative.

The Authorities from which the materials are derived, may be divided into PRINTED, ORAL, and MANUSCRIPT information.

PRINTED INFORMATION.

Though this ſource of intelligence is open to every writer, and an omiſſion to conſult and compare the advocates on both ſides of the queſtion, indicates either negligence or want of candour, yet *Smollett* and *Belſham*, in their accounts of the times, have betrayed theſe faults in the higheſt degree. Dazzled by the eloquence of Pulteney, ſeduced by the ſophiſtry of Bolingbroke, or deluded by the ſpecioufneſs of Cheſterfield, they appear to have formed their opinions without compariſon, to have ſtigmatized the whole adminiſtration of Sir Robert Walpole, as an uniform maſs of corruption and depravity, as a gloomy period, during which not a ſingle ray of light gleams through the impenetrable darkneſs. Though I have occaſionally noticed the miſrepreſentations of theſe writers, yet, as Smollett quotes no authorities, and appears *never* to have conſulted the Journals, and either partially or ſuperficially to have peruſed the parliamentary debates; and as Belſham is, in general, a mere copyiſt of Smollett

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lett as to facts, though he differs from him in ſpeculations; I have not relied on either as an authority.

The hiſtory of England which I have principally conſulted, is the continuation of Rapin, publiſhed under the name of Tindal, but principally written by Dr. Birch. His papers in the Muſeum, and in the Hardwicke Collection, which I have examined with ſcrupulous attention, and various other documents ſubmitted to his inſpection, to which I have had acceſs, prove great accuracy of reſearch, judgment in ſelection, and fidelity in narration. He derived conſiderable aſſiſtance from perſons of political eminence, particularly the late lord Walpole, the late earl of Hardwicke, and the honourable Charles Yorke. * Birch was a ſtaunch Whig, but his political opinions have never led him to forget his duty as an hiſtorian. He has not garbled or falſified debates, or miſtated facts, he has not wantonly traduced characters, or acrimoniouſly reviled individuals, becauſe they eſpouſed the cauſe which he diſapproved; but in his whole work, whether he praiſes or blames, there is a manly integrity and candid temperance, which muſt recommend him to the diſcerning reader.

It naturally became a part of my taſk to conſult all works which treat of the life and adminiſtration

* The account of the partition treaty was written by the late earl of Hardwicke. The account of lord Somers's argument in the Banker's caſe, was written by his great nephew, the late Mr. C. Yorke. I can alſo trace numerous communications by Horace Walpole, though they cannot be ſo eaſily ſpecified.

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niſtration of Sir Robert Walpole; and it is remarkable, that except political pamphlets, which were confined to temporary and ſpecific objects, my utmoſt reſearch could only diſcover two publications.

The firſt is, "A critical Hiſtory of the Admi-"niſtration of Sir Robert Walpole, now Earl of "Orford, collected chiefly from the Debates in "Parliament, and the political Writings on both "Sides, 1743." This anonymous work is contemptible both in matter and ſtyle. It is, with few exceptions, a mere compilation from the moſt virulent oppoſition pamphlets, but is uſeful as an index of the points which, at the time, drew moſt attention, and as containing an account of the moſt remarkable publications of parties on both ſides.

The ſecond is, "Hiſtoire du Miniſtère du Che-"valier *Walpool* devenu Miniſtre d'Angleterre, "et Comte *d'Oxford*, Amſterdam, 1764, in three "volumes." This work is principally compiled from the preceding publication, although the author affects greater impartiality, and frequently turns the moſt virulent cenſures into the moſt fulſome panegyric. The writer is ſo ignorant as to call him earl of *Oxford*, and ſo deficient in point of information, that the whole period from the declaration of war againſt Spain in 1739, to the reſignation of the miniſter in 1742, is contained in fourteen lines. From ſources ſo partial and deficient, little information could be derived.

I have

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I have carefully conſulted the political writings of the times, on both ſides of the queſtion. I have peruſed with ſome attention the moſt violent invectives, and party ſtatements againſt the miniſter, as well as thoſe that were written in his favour, and from a ſcrupulous compariſon of both have endeavoured to extract the truth.

Theſe works are too numerous to recapitulate. To the political writings of Bolingbroke, Pulteney, and Chefterfield, I have paid peculiar attention, and ſcrutinized them with a cloſe, and, I truſt, an impartial inſpection.

The "Craftſman," which commenced in 1727, was the great vehicle of oppoſition eſſays. This paper, as it always contained the ſtrength of the arguments urged againſt the meaſures of government, detailed with great eloquence and wit, has been aſſiduouſly examined. The Political State of Great Britain, the Hiſtorical Regiſter, and Annals of Europe, (ample and not incorrect periodical publications,) have contributed information with reſpect to domeſtic events, points of chronology, and debates in parliament.

I have derived collateral aſſiſtance from the Gentleman's and London Magazines, which were ably conducted.

I have occaſionally collected the ſubſtance of debates from *Chandler*'s Parliamentary Proceedings, to the general accuracy of which, though recently called in queſtion, ſeveral reaſons have induced me to give credit.

1. They

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1. They are taken from the contemporary papers, ſuch as the Hiſtorical Regiſter, and the Political State of Great Britain; the authors of which were frequently ſupplied with notes and memorandums by members of parliament. From the year 1735, when the debates were no longer publiſhed in the Political State, the ſpeeches were given in the Gentleman's Magazine by Guthrie, and in the London Magazine by Gordon, both of whom conſtantly attended in the gallery of the houſe, and received information from members of parliament.

2. There are among the Walpole and Orford papers minutes of Sir Robert Walpole's ſpeeches, and occaſional notes, taken by him in the houſe of commons, of thoſe of other members. In comparing theſe minutes and notes with the ſpeeches in Chandler, I generally find the leading expreſſions preſerved in the debates; which proves the authenticity of thoſe particular ſpeeches, and furniſhes a ſtrong preſumption in favour of the reſt.

3. Several letters, which I have publiſhed in the Correſpondence, contain brief accounts of the parliamentary proceedings, and in moſt inſtances accord with the printed debates.

4. Sir Robert Walpole told his ſon, the late earl of Orford, that his ſpeeches were in general faithfully repreſented in the public prints.

5. Lord Bath aſſured the preſent biſhop of Saliſbury, Dr. Douglas, that moſt of his ſpeeches were correctly given, yet better than he had delivered them.

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From the 19th of November, 1740, many of the debates were *written* by Dr. Johnſon, and publiſhed in the Gentleman's Magazine. Doubts have ariſen concerning their authenticity. Some of Johnſon's biographers have declared that they were partly compoſed by himſelf; another, Sir John Hawkins, that they were wholly fictitious; and Johnſon himſelf is ſaid to have confeſſed, that they were not authentic, and excepting their general import, were the work of his own imagination.

This account, however, is not perfectly conſonant to fact. Either Johnſon deceived himſelf into an exaggeration of his own powers, or his biographers miſtook his aſſertion. The real truth is, that Johnſon conſtantly received notes and heads of the ſpeeches from perſons employed by Cave, and particularly from Guthrie. The biſhop of Saliſbury recollects to have ſeen ſeveral of theſe notes, which Guthrie communicated to him on the very day on which he obtained them, which were regularly tranſmitted to Johnſon, and formed the baſis of his orations.

ORAL AND MANUSCRIPT INFORMATION.

WALPOLE PAPERS.

My firſt and warmeſt acknowledgments are due to lord Walpole, for the papers of his father Horatio, the firſt lord Walpole of Wolterton, brother

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ther of Sir Robert Walpole, and embaſſador in France and Holland. This collection has afforded the moſt ample materials: It contains his original correſpondence, both public and private, as well abroad as in England; many confidential letters which paſſed between him, the queen, and Sir Robert Walpole; various documents, memorials, and political diſſertations, which afford the cleareſt inſight into foreign affairs, and prove his active and indefatigable exertions.

A ſpecific detail of this collection, which occupies no leſs than one hundred and forty folio volumes, muſt be referred to a future publication, in which I purpoſe to give a ſelection of the moſt intereſting letters not inſerted in this work.

I am alſo indebted to lord Walpole for many intereſting anecdotes and explanations, which he had from his father.

Orford Papers.

The late earl of Orford, third ſon of Sir Robert Walpole, favoured me with acceſs to all the papers of his father remaining in his poſſeſſion.

Had this collection been preſerved entire, it would have been invaluable and unparalleled, both for extent and importance, but ſome have been deſtroyed, others diſperſed, and many loſt. When he retired from office, the miniſter deſtroyed a large quantity. Not long before his death he ſaid to his ſon, "Horace, when I am gone, you will find many curious papers in the drawer of this table," and mentioned, among others, the memorial which

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had been drawn up by Bolingbroke, and preſented by the ducheſs of Kendal to the king. When his ſon, ſome time after his death, inſpected the drawer, the papers were loſt, and were never afterwards recovered. In relating this anecdote, the late earl of Orford declared his opinion that the papers had been either inadvertently deſtroyed by his elder brother, or ſtolen by a ſteward. Several letters belonging to this collection were given to the late lord Walpole, and are preſerved at Wolterton, Notwithſtanding theſe defalcations, the collection ſtill contains many documents of high importance, of which I have availed myſelf.

To lord Orford I am highly indebted for numerous facts and anecdotes relating to Sir Robert Walpole, which nobody but himſelf could have authenticated. In gratefully acknowledging theſe favours, I feel it my duty to pay a juſt tribute to his candour. He repeatedly ſaid, "You will remember that I am the ſon of Sir Robert Walpole, and therefore muſt be prejudiced in his favour. Facts I will not miſrepreſent or diſguiſe, but my opinions and reflections on thoſe facts you will receive with caution, and adopt or reject at your diſcretion." Although he teſtified a natural ſolicitude to ſee the memoirs of his father, yet he not unfrequently expreſſed his wiſhes that the work might not appear while he was alive, leſt it might be thought that from motives of delicacy, I had not delivered my ſentiments with freedom.

TOWNSHEND

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Townshend Papers.

I am obliged to the marquis Townſhend for acceſs to the papers of his grandfather Charles, the ſecond viſcount Townſhend, who was plenipotentiary at Gertruydenburg and at the Hague, and principal ſecretary of ſtate. Lord Townſhend's maſterly letters to George the Firſt; the notes between George the Second and him; the confidential intercourſe which he regularly maintained with his brother-in-law, Sir Robert Walpole, while he was at Hanover; have materially contributed to illuſtrate thoſe tranſactions in which the brother miniſters had a principal ſhare.

Hardwicke Papers.

To my noble friend the earl of Hardwicke, I gratefully acknowledge my obligations for the uſe of his collection. From it I have been ſupplied with various papers, memorandums, and narratives of his grandfather, the lord chancellor, and of the late earl of Hardwicke; letters from the duke of Newcaſtle; the confidential correſpondence between Sir Robert Walpole and lord Townſhend, and the papers of Sir Luke Schaub, together with other documents of importance.

Sydney Papers.

I am indebted to lord Sydney for the communication of letters which belonged to his father, the honourable Thomas Townſhend, ſecond ſon

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of Charles viſcount Townſhend, and the confidential friend of Sir Robert Walpole. The kindneſs of lord Sydney, and his brother, Charles Townſhend, Eſquire, has alſo ſupplied many anecdotes derived from the converſation of their father.

WALDEGRAVE PAPERS.

To the Counteſs of WALDEGRAVE, I am obliged for ſubmitting to my inſpection the diſpatches of her grandfather James, firſt earl of Waldegrave, during his embaſſies at Vienna and Paris, from 1727 to 1740. Among other points of ſecret hiſtory, they detail many intereſting converſations with Cardinal Fleury, and with Chauvelin, keeper of the ſeals. They contain alſo various letters to and from Sir Robert Walpole, of the moſt private and confidential nature, which are printed in the Correſpondence.

In addition to theſe, I have to enumerate other communications made in the moſt liberal and obliging manner, and to offer my grateful acknowledgments.

HARRINGTON PAPERS.

To the earl of Harrington, for the correſpondence of his grandfather William Stanhope, firſt earl of Harrington, who was envoy and embaſſador at Madrid, plenipotentiary at the congreſs of Soiſſons, and ſecretary of ſtate. Alſo for ſome papers of Charles Stanhope, elder brother of the firſt

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firſt earl of Harrington, who was private and confidential ſecretary to earl Stanhope, and ſecretary to the treaſury under the earl of Sunderland. This collection ſupplied me with many intereſting letters, which relate to the ſchiſm in the adminiſtration in 1716, and a confidential correſpondence between Newcaſtle and Harrington, previous to the diſmiſſion of lord Townſhend.

Grantham Papers.

To lady Grantham, for the papers of Sir Thomas Robinſon, firſt lord Grantham, who was confidential ſecretary to lord Walpole, during his embaſſy in France, and envoy and plenipotentiary at Vienna. Theſe documents compriſe an intereſting account of the negotiations and tranſactions between Great Britain and the houſe of Auſtria, during a period of eighteen years.

Poyntz Papers.

To Stephen Poyntz, Eſquire, for various communications from the papers of his father Stephen Poyntz, Eſquire, confidential ſecretary of lord Townſhend, envoy to the court of Sweden, and one of the plenipotentiaries at the congreſs of Soiſſons.

Keene Papers.

To Benjamin Keene, Eſquire, for the papers of his uncle Sir Benjamin Keene, ſo long, and with ſuch diſtinguiſhed eminence, envoy and embaſſador at Madrid.

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CAMPBELL PAPERS.

To Archibald Campbell, Eſquire, for the papers of his grandfather, Archibald earl of Ilay, and duke of Argyle; in which I had the good fortune to find ſeveral original letters of Sir Robert Walpole.

DEVONSHIRE PAPERS.

To the late worthy and much regretted lord John Cavendiſh, for ſeveral intereſting letters, in the poſſeſſion of the duke of Devonſhire, written by Sir Robert Walpole, the marquis of Hartington, and Sir Robert Wilmot, to William duke of Devonſhire, lord lieutenant of Ireland, a ſhort time previous to the reſignation of Sir Robert Walpole.

ETOUGH PAPERS.

To John Plumptre, Eſquire, for the papers of the Rev. Henry Etough, rector of Therfield, Hertfordſhire. Theſe papers form a valuable maſs of intelligence. They contain ſketches of the reigns of William, Anne, George the Firſt and Second; numerous accounts of Sir Robert Walpole, which he obtained in converſation, either from the miniſter himſelf or Horace Walpole, the minutes of which, in various inſtances, he noted down. They compriſe much information derived from Mr. Scrope, ſecretary to the treaſury, and other perſons whoſe authorities he conſtantly cites; and a long and intereſting correſpondence with Horace Walpole. Etough was a man of great reſearch and

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and eager curiosity, replete with prejudice, but idolizing Sir Robert Walpole. In the examination of these ample documents, I have only adopted such parts as were in my judgment entitled to full credit.

The following are the principal articles in this collection, of which I have availed myself: "A Miscellany, being Minutes of several Conversations while Sir Robert Walpole, and when Lord Orford, on several Subjects, from 1734 to 1744, with some Particulars relating to his latest Transactions.——"Minutes of a Conversation with Sir Robert Walpole, on the Attempt of Lord Bolingbroke and the Duchess of Kendal, to obtain his Dismission in 1727." Printed in the Correspondence.——"An imperfect Essay on the Character and Behaviour of the late Earl of Orford, addressed to the right honourable Horatio Walpole, Esquire."——"Minutes of two Conferences with Horatio Walpole at Putney, August 6th and 20th, 1752."——"Minutes of a Conversation with the right honourable Horace Walpole, Esquire, November 3, 1755."——"Observations on the Elections in 1734 and 41, relative to lord Orford."——"Minutes of a Conversation with Mr. Scrope, secretary to the Treasury, relating to the Arrangement of the new Ministry on the Accession of George the Second." Printed in the Correspondence.

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Weston Papers.

To the Rev. Charles Weſton, prebendary of Durham, for communications from the papers of his father, Edward Weſton, Eſquire, under ſecretary of ſtate; containing, among other intereſting particulars, letters from Sir Robert Walpole and lord Townſhend, on the arrival of the duke of Ripperda in England, and a manly remonſtrance of lord Townſhend to the king, diſſuading the journey to Hanover; which the reader will find in the Correſpondence.

Onslow Papers.

To lord Onſlow, for ſome very intereſting remarks of ſpeaker Onſlow, on various parts of Sir Robert Walpole's conduct, with anecdotes of the principal leaders of oppoſition. Printed in the Correſpondence.

Astle Papers.

To Thomas Aſtle, Eſquire, keeper of the records at the Tower, for various communications from his private collection of manuſcripts, particularly, correſpondence of the earl of Clarendon, during his miſſion at Hanover, and letters from ſecretary St. John to Drummond; which are printed in the Correſpondence.

Stanhope Papers.

The ſchiſm in the Whig adminiſtration divided Walpole and Stanhope, and converted their

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long eſtabliſhed friendſhip into bitter enmity. As the character of James, firſt earl of Stanhope, was ſeverely arraigned by Townſhend and Walpole, candour impelled me to apply to his repreſentative, the preſent earl, for any documents in his poſſeſſion, which might tend to vindicate the memory of his anceſtor from thoſe aſperſions. This requeſt was acceded to in the moſt liberal manner, and thoſe papers have materially tended to elucidate the tranſactions of that period.

Midleton Papers.

I am indebted to lord Midleton for the papers of his grandfather, the chancellor of Ireland, which develope the hiſtory of Wood's patent, and compriſe ſeveral letters from his brother Thomas Brodrick, chairman of the committee of ſecrecy in the South Sea inquiry, and of his ſon Saint John Brodrick; moſt of theſe are replete with the ſevereſt ſarcaſms and invectives againſt the miniſter.

Egremont Papers.

To the earl of Egremont, for the letters of lord Bolingbroke to his grandfather Sir William Wyndham, remarkable for that animation, elegance of ſtyle, plauſibility of argument, and virulence of invective, which diſtinguiſh his writings. They contain the moſt ſevere animadverſions on the conduct and principles of Sir Robert Walpole, and are filled with the moſt bitter reproaches againſt his meaſures: I have thought it

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it my duty not to ſuppreſs a ſingle pagragraph which reflected on the adminiſtration of the miniſter.

PULTENEY PAPERS.

To Sir William Pulteney, for the papers of his wife's father David Pulteney, commiſſioner of the board of trade, and lord of the admiralty, who became the ſtrenuous opponent of Sir Robert Walpole, and wrote againſt him with great ſeverity in the "Craftſman."

MELCOMBE PAPERS.

To Henry Penruddocke Wyndham, Eſquire, for the Papers of George Dodington, Lord Melcombe, from which I have ſelected ſeveral private letters, animadverting, with much acrimony, on the conduct and ſyſtem of Sir Robert Walpole, extolling the principles and directing the views of that oppoſition which drove him from the helm.

To Dr. Douglas, biſhop of Saliſbury, I am indebted for ſeveral intereſting particulars, derived from daily converſations, during an intimate intercouſe of many years with his friend and patron the earl of Bath. While I gratefully acknowledge my obligations to this learned and highly-reſpected prelate, for much valuable information during the progreſs of this work, I feel extraordinary gratification in reflecting that the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole have derived aſſiſtance

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ſiſtance from the friend of his great opponent, William Pulteney.

Governor Pownall claims my grateful acknowledgments for the communication of a very ingenious and able eſſay on the conduct and principles of Sir Robert Walpole, which places the miniſter in a new point of view. It is inſerted in the Correſpondence.

With the aſſiſtance of theſe extenſive ſources of information, I have been enabled to elucidate many parts of ſecret hiſtory, either totally unknown, or wholly miſrepreſented, and to trace the motives of action which influenced the conduct of the miniſter, and directed the views of the Britiſh cabinet.

I have not been biaſſed by the prejudices of party hatred or party affection. I have always conſidered the connections and principles of the perſons from whom I derived political information, and after duly weighing all the circumſtances, have equally avoided the extremes on either ſide.

It has naturally been my principal object to trace and diſcuſs thoſe events, which perſonally relate to Sir Robert Walpole, either in his public or private character, and in which he was either directly or eventually concerned. In the courſe of my inquiries, and in the peruſal of the numerous documents to which I have had acceſs, I obtained information of various collateral circumſtances, and of numerous characters, which though they

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they did not immediately attach to the life of the miniſter, yet were connected with the tranſactions which he either influenced or directed. Hence I have been led to make occaſional digreſſions, in order to elucidate intereſting but obſcure points of hiſtory. I have alſo introduced biographical memoirs of eminent perſons, who were either the oppoſers or favourers of the miniſter, whoſe characters the papers and documents in my poſſeſſion have enabled me to illuſtrate.

Fully aware of the uncertainty of tradition, I have been extremely cautious to confine myſelf to the narroweſt limits. I have never once adopted the hearſay of a hearſay, and have paid no attention to any anecdotes or facts except from thoſe who derived their information from perſons of veracity, that were themſelves engaged in the tranſactions of the times, and who authenticated their narratives.

I have, in general, quoted my authorities, and though in ſome inſtances I have omitted to enumerate them, that I might avoid the appearance of affectation, yet I can ſafely aver, that I have not advanced a ſingle fact in the whole work, of the truth of which I have not been convinced by the moſt unexceptionable evidence.

In a few inſtances I have collected the ſubſtance of the miniſter's ſpeeches from parliamentary minutes in his own hand writing. From theſe memorandums I have particularly drawn his ſpeeches againſt the peerage bill, on propoſing the exciſe ſcheme, in oppoſing Sir John Barnard's plan

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plan for the reduction of intereſt, and in reply to the motion made by Sandys to remove him.

I have ſcrupulouſly avoided all alluſions to the tranſactions which are now paſſing before us, leſt I might have been tempted to make my work the vehicle of panegyric or invective, and have fallen into an error not uncommon with ſpeculative writers, who judge of remote facts by recent circumſtances, and affectedly aſſimilate the events of paſt ages with the tranſactions of the preſent day.

I cannot cloſe this Preface without paying a juſt tribute of gratitude to my ingenious friend Mr. Adolphus, for the advantages which I have derived from his literary aſſiſtance in preparing theſe Memoirs for the preſs.

March 10, 1798.

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MEMOIRS OF SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

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A GENEALOGICAL TABLE

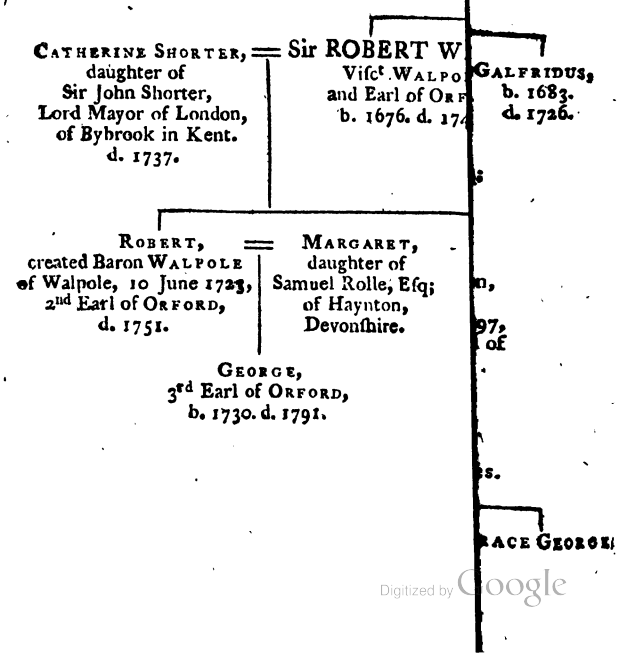
OF THE

WALPOLE FAMILY,

WITH THE DESCENDANTS

OF

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.



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MEMOIRS

OF

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

PERIOD THE FIRST:

From his Birth, to the Acceſſion of GEORGE the Firſt; 1676—1714.

CHAPTER THE FIRST: 1676—1701.

Family.—Birth.—Talents.—Education.—Country Purſuits.—Marriage.—Paternal Eſtate.

Period I, 1676 to 1714; Family.

THE Anceſtors of Sir Robert Walpole, who was the eighteenth male of his family, in a lineal deſcent, may be traced from the conqueſt. They took their ſurname, according to the cuſtom of thoſe days, from the town of Walpole, in Norfolk, on the borders of Lincolnſhire, where they had their reſidence, until one of them exchanged the family ſeat for Houghton, in the ſame county *,

Sir Edward Walpole, his grandfather, was elected

* Annexed Genealogical Table. Edmonſon's Baronegium. Collins's Peerage; Article, Earl of Orford. Documents among the Orford Papers.

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Period I. 1676 to 1714.

member for the borough of Lynn Regis, in the convention parliament, assembled in April 1660, and voted for the restoration of Charles the Second. As a recompence for his zeal in the royal cause, he was created Knight of the Bath. He was remarkable for his eloquence and weight in parliament; and once, on a warm altercation in the house, he suggested an expedient which was immediately adopted by both parties, for which Waller the poet, in a high strain of panegyric, ironically proposed that he should be sent to the Tower, for not having sooner composed the dispute when he had it in his power *. He died in 1667.

Robert, the eldest son and heir of Sir Edward Walpole, sat in parliament for the borough of Castle Rising, in the county of Norfolk, from the first year of William and Mary, till his decease in November 1700. He was deputy lieutenant, and colonel of the militia, in the county of Norfolk, and took as active a share as his situation and circumstances permitted in forwarding the Revolution. He considerably improved his estate by his prudent management; educated a large family with much credit, and was held in great estimation by the Whig party, whose measures he appears to have uniformly supported. He had by his wife Mary, only daughter and heiress of Sir Jeffery Burwell, of Rougham, in Suffolk, nineteen children, of whom ROBERT, afterwards Sir ROBERT

* Ædes Walpolianæ.

WALPOLE

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WALPOLE* and EARL of ORFORD, the ſubject of theſe Memoirs, was the third ſon.

It ſeems to be an error not uncommon in mankind, to endeavour to exalt the merit of favourite and eminent characters, by falſe and exaggerated encomiums, and to attribute ſolely to nature, what is uſually the combined effect of nature, education, and accident. The voice of friendſhip, admiration, or flattery, has declared, with a ſimilar prejudice, that Sir Robert Walpole was born a miniſter. It was ſaid of him, that he was endowed with a genius for calculation; and that the method which he adopted in ſettling accounts, was a myſtery underſtood only by himſelf. Others of his admirers conſidered application in him as not neceſſary, becauſe he knew every thing by intuition. But truth and impartiality reject ſuch unqualified aſſertions, and the events of his early life will ſhew that the natural talents of Walpole, were rather ſolid than brilliant, and that his acquirements were the fruit of conſiderable induſtry.

He received an excellent education. He came early into parliament; ſpoke at firſt indifferently, until habit and practice rendered him an able debater. He was promoted to an office in the admiralty in the 28th year of his age; became ſecretary at war at thirty; was trained to buſineſs under Marlborough and Godolphin; and managed the houſe of commons during the Whig adminiſtration. Being deprived of his place, he diſtinguiſhed

* The early traits in the life of Sir ROBERT WALPOLE, were principally communicated by his ſon HORACE, the late earl of Orford.

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Period I. 1676 to 1714.

himself in opposition; was persecuted by the Tories, and considered as a martyr by the Whigs. He promoted, with unabated zeal, the Protestant succession, and was rewarded for his services with the place of paymaster of the forces by the new sovereign, whom he had assisted in fixing upon the throne. Thus educated and inured to business, having thus served under government, and acted in opposition, he was placed at the head of the treasury. In this situation, adored by his family, beloved by his friends, and esteemed by his party, he was courted and idolized. His facility for transacting business, and his talents for calculation, were considered by his fond admirers as the gift of nature, when, in reality, they were the result of education, assiduity, and experience.

Birth.

ROBERT WALPOLE was born at Houghton on the 26th of August 1676 *. He received the first rudiments

* There is great confusion, and difference of opinion, with regard to the age of Sir Robert Walpole. He himself writes, in his letter to general Churchill, June 24th 1743; "No disgrace attends me since *Sixty-seven*." According therefore to this account he must have been born in 1675, and died aged 69, or in his 70th year. His son Horace, the late Earl of Orford, confirmed this account, and told me that, had he lived till the 26th of August 1745, he would have been 70.——The register at Houghton gives no account of his birth or time of baptism; but his death is thus recorded: A. D. 1745 The right honourable earl of Orford died March 18, and was buried the 25th, in the 68th year of his age.—At the bottom of the same page, in another hand, is, "The great Sir Robert Walpole, earl of Orford, departed this life the 18th March 174$\frac{4}{5}$, aged 68 Years, and was interred the 25 D°."——According to Collins's Peerage, and the Gentleman's Magazine, he was 71 at the time of his death, which would place his birth in 1674.——The register of his birth by his mother settles the dispute. The reverend Horace Hammond, rector of Great Massingham, in Norfolk, great Nephew to Sir Robert Walpole, to whom I am obliged for the abovementioned extracts from the parish register, favoured me with an account of the births of all the children of Robert and Mary Walpole, registered in her own hand, in a book which is in his possession.

AGE

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rudiments of learning at a private ſeminary at Maſſingham, in Norfolk, and completed his education on the foundation at Eton, under Mr. Newborough, who appears to have been diſtinguiſhed for his knowledge, and to have raiſed the ſchool to a high degree of eminence. Walpole was naturally indolent, and diſliked application, but the emulation of a public ſeminary, the alternate menaces and praiſes of his maſter, the maxim repeatedly inculcated by his father, that he was a younger brother, and that his future fortune in life depended ſolely upon his own exertions, overcame the original inertneſs of his diſpoſition. Before he quitted Eton, he had ſo conſiderably improved himſelf in claſſical literature, as

Chapter 1. 1676 to 1701. 1689. Education.

AGE OF MY CHILDREN.

Suſan was born	6th June		1672.
Mary —	8th June		1673.
Edward —	23d June		1674.
Burwell —	6th Auguſt		1675.
ROBERT —	26th Auguſt		1676.
John —	3d September		1677.
Horatio —	8th December		1678.
Chriſtopher —	20th February		$16\frac{79}{80}$.
Elizabeth —	24th March		$16\frac{80}{81}$.
Elizabeth —	16th October		1682.
Galfridus —	15th March		$16\frac{83}{84}$.
Anne —	6th April		1685.
Dorothy —	18th September		1686.
Suſan —	5th December		1687.
Mordaunt —	13th December		1688.
A boy ſtill-born	8th April		1690.
Charles	30th June		1691.
William —	7th April		1693.
A daughter ſtill-born	20th January		$16\frac{94}{95}$.

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Period I. 1676 to 1714.

as to bear the character of an excellent ſcholar. A peculiar fondneſs for Horace *, marked his good ſenſe, and even after his retirement from public life, when he had long diſcontinued his early ſtudies, he was by no means deficient in the knowledge of the Greek language. His talents for oratory began to develop themſelves at a very early period, for his ſchool-maſter being informed that ſeveral of his former ſcholars who had been educated at Eton, and particularly St. John, had diſtinguiſhed themſelves for their eloquence in the houſe of commons, replied, "But I am impatient to hear that Robert Walpole has ſpoken, for I am convinced that he will be a good orator."

On the 22d of April 1696 †, he was admitted a ſcholar at King's ‡ College, in the univerſity of Cambridge. During his reſidence, he was ſeized with the ſmall-pox, which was of a moſt malignant ſort; and he continued for ſome time in imminent danger. Doctor Brady §, the famous hiſtorical advocate for the Tory principles of the Engliſh conſtitution, who was his phyſician, ſaid to one of the fellows of King's College, warmly

* He was accuſtomed to give his ſon, the late earl of Orford, ſubjects for his Latin compoſitions, and he almoſt always took them from Horace. Lord Orford uſed to recollect two themes which were applicable to his ſituation as firſt miniſter:

Principibus placuiſſe viris non ultima laus eſt.
Non cuivis homini contingit adire Corinthum

† Regiſter of King's College.

‡ A collection being made, after he was prime miniſter, for the new building at King's College, he ſubſcribed £. 500; and on receiving the thanks of the provoſt and fellows, he replied, "I deſerve no thanks, I have only paid for my board."

§ Brady, author of "An Introduction to the old Engliſh Hiſtory," in 1 vol. fol.; and, "A complete Hiſtory of England," in 2 vol. fol.

attached

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attached to the ſame party; "We muſt take care "to ſave this young man, or we ſhall be accuſed "of having purpoſely neglected him, becauſe he "is ſo violent a Whig." It was indeed principally owing to his kind and aſſiduous attention, that Walpole recovered. Notwithſtanding Brady's political prejudices, he was ſo much pleaſed with the ſpirit and diſpoſition of his young patient, that he obſerved with an affectionate attachment, "His "ſingular eſcape ſeems to be a ſure indication that "he is reſerved for important purpoſes." In the latter period of his life, when the prediction had been fulfilled, this anecdote was frequently related by Walpole with a complacency, which ſhewed that it had made a deep impreſſion on his mind, and proved his ſatisfaction at the recollection of an event that ſeemed to anticipate his elevation. Chapter 1. 1676 to 1701.

At college he formed a ſtrict intimacy with Hare and Bland, who were members of the ſame foundation, and in every ſituation of life, ſhewed an affectionate regard for the friends of his early youth. He raiſed Hare, who afterwards ably diſtinguiſhed himſelf in defending the meaſures of the Whig adminiſtration, to the biſhopric of Chicheſter, and promoted Bland to the provoſtſhip of Eton College, and deanery of Durham.

On the death of his elder ſurviving brother, in 1698, becoming heir to the paternal eſtate, he reſigned his ſcholarſhip on the 25th of May. He had been originally deſigned for the church, and was frequently heard to ſay, with the confidence which characteriſes an aſpiring mind, that if ſuch a deſti- Paternal Eſtate.

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Period I. 1676 to 1714.

a deſtination had taken place, inſtead of being prime miniſter, he ſhould have been archbiſhop of Canterbury. Fortunately the ſuperſtructure of his education was made before the death of his elder brother, for after that event he relapſed into his natural indolence, and the impulſe of neceſſity being removed, no longer continued to proſecute his ſtudies for the purpoſe of purſuing a liberal profeſſion. His father alſo aſſiſted in withdrawing him from literary occupations. He immediately took his ſon from the univerſity, endeavoured to fix him in the country, and made him attend to the improvement of his eſtate: with that view he employed him once a week in ſuperintending the ſale of his cattle at the neighbouring towns, and ſeemed ambitious that his ſon ſhould become the firſt grazier in the county. His father was of a jovial diſpoſition, and often puſhed to exceſs the pleaſures of the table: the hoſpitable manſion of Houghton was much frequented by the neighbouring gentry, and the convivial temper of Walpole accorded with the ſcenes of ruſtic jollity. At theſe meetings the father occaſionally ſupplied his glaſs with a double portion of wine, adding, "Come Robert, you ſhall drink twice, while I drink once; for I will not permit the ſon, in his ſober ſenſes, to be witneſs to the intoxication of his father." His mornings being thus engaged in the occupations of farming, or in the ſports of the field, of which he was always extremely fond, and his evenings paſſed in feſtive ſociety, he had no leiſure for literary purſuits.

On

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On the 30th of July 1700, he married, in Knightsbridge Chapel *, Catherine, daughter of Sir John Shorter, lord mayor of London, a woman of exquisite beauty and accomplished manners; and the amusements of London succeeded the more active employments of the country. Soon after the marriage his father died, and Walpole inherited the family estate, the rent-roll of which exceeded £. 2,000 a year †. It was charged with his mother's jointure, and with the fortunes of the younger children, which amounted to £. 9,000. His wife's dowry discharged this incumbrance, and his mother's jointure fell in by her death in 1711.

Chapter 1. 1676 to 1701.

Nov. 28, 1700.

* Register of Knightsbridge Chapel, which the reverend D. Lysons, the learned author of the Environs of London, was so obliging as to search at my request.

† Among the Orford Papers is a document in the hand-writing of his Father, shewing the amount of the estate, of which the substance is submitted to the reader, as a proof that the reproaches cast upon him by his opponents, of being a needy adventurer, were unfounded.

June 9, 1700. A particular of my estate within the county of Norfolk, as it is now let:

	£.	s.	d.
Manor of Houghton	352	11	—
Manor of Birch Newton	80	—	—
Manor of Great Bircham	277	—	—
Manor of Bircham Toft	101	—	—
of Darlingham	253	11	4
of Sisiem	304	16	8
of Westwich	180	10	—
of Glostnops in Ledgett	100	—	—
of Harply	100	11	—
In Burrough, near Yarmouth	18	—	—
Small lands and tenements	50	—	—
Total in Norfolk	1,818	—	—
In Suffolk:			
Manor of Hasset	300	—	—
Farm of Cavendish, &c.	51	—	—
Total	2,169	—	—

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Period I. 1676 to 1714.

The death of his father threw him into the buſy ſcenes of public life, when the violent ſpirit of party gave an impulſe to his political exertions; and at the moment when the demiſe of Charles the Second, king of Spain, fixed the attention of Europe, and excited general apprehenſions in England, left the united dominions of the whole Spaniſh monarchy ſhould center in a prince of the houſe of Bourbon.

CHAPTER THE SECOND:

1700—1701.

Elected Member of Parliament.—Sketch of the important Tranſactions during the Two laſt Parliaments of King William.—Act of Settlement in favour of the Proteſtant Succeſſion and Family.—Principles and Conduct of the Leaders at the Revolution.—Ineffectual Endeavour of William to extend the Act of Settlement in favour of the Hanover Line, virtually introduced by the Act for diſabling Papiſts.—Artful Management of William to procure the Extenſion of that Act on the Death of the Duke of Gloucester.

Chapter 2. 1700 to 1701.

ON the deceaſe of his father, Walpole was elected member for Caſtle Riſing, and ſat for that borough in the two ſhort parliaments, which were aſſembled in the two laſt years of the reign of king William.

The death of Charles the Second, king of Spain, in the month of October 1700, the acceptation of his teſtament by Louis the Fourteenth, in breach of the ſecond partition treaty, and the quiet acceſſion of Philip duke of Anjou to the crown of Spain, acknowledged by England and the United Provinces, were events which had preceded the meeting of the parliament in which Walpole firſt

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ſat. The act of ſettlement in favour of the electreſs Sophia; the violent conduct of the Tory houſe of commons in the impeachment of Somers and the Whig lords; the death of James the Second; the acknowledgment of his ſon as James the Third, by Louis the Fourteenth; the indignation of the Engliſh at that event; the ſucceſsful manœuvres of William to rouſe the ſpirit of the nation againſt France, and to obtain the concurrence of the Tories to a Continental war; the ſecond grand alliance; the diſſolution of the Tory parliament and miniſtry; the choice of a Whig adminiſtration and parliament; the declaration of war againſt France; the attainder of the pretended prince of Wales; the abjuration oath; the death of William, at the moment when he had given an impulſe to the grand combination; were the important events which agitated the public mind during the two laſt parliaments of his reign. To give a detail of theſe complicated and intereſting tranſactions is not the province of a writer of memoirs, but muſt be left to the hiſtorian of the times; unleſs they influenced the future conduct and policy of the Miniſter, whoſe life I am attempting to delineate. With this view, it may not be improper to ſtate the circumſtances which preceded and accompanied the paſſing of the act of ſettlement, and induced all parties, notwithſtanding the avowed repugnance of a majority in the commons, to adopt that meaſure, which ſecured to the houſe of Hanover the throne of Great Britain.

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Period I. 1676 to 1714.

tain, and had ſo ſtrong and permanent an influence on the ſubſequent conduct of Walpole.

When the arbitrary conduct of James the Second againſt the conſtitution and religion had raiſed the indignation of England, and when our great deliverer William, the prince of Orange, had co-operated with the nation in driving that monarch from the throne; the leaders of the convention parliament, which eſtabliſhed the revolution, acted with a ſpirit and wiſdom well becoming the arduous ſituation of affairs, and with a temper which accommodated itſelf, as occaſion required, to the cuſtoms and prejudices of the nation. While they ſet aſide that abſolute and indefeaſible right, which it was averred no conduct, however tyrannical, could violate, and laid down the doctrine of reſiſtance in caſes of extreme neceſſity, they dreaded the evils of an elective monarchy, and guarded againſt the future eſtabliſhment of a republican form of government. When they found it neceſſary to break the hereditary line of deſcent, they made the deviation as ſmall as poſſible, no more than the exigency of circumſtances required, and re-eſtabliſhed it in the ſame manner as it exiſted before that breach was made. With theſe principles conſtantly in view, they declared that James, having endeavoured to ſubvert the conſtitution, had abdicated the government, and thereby rendered the throne vacant.

The throne being thus declared abdicated or vacant, by the abſence of James the Second, and his ſon being ſuppoſed illegitimate, the next in order of

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of ſucceſſion was Mary, eldeſt daughter of James. But as the nation owed its deliverance from arbitrary power to William, the convention departed from the regular line by declaring him king, jointly with his wife Mary, and by veſting in him the ſole adminiſtration of government. This appointment was a deviation from the ſyſtem of hereditary deſcent, dictated by imperious neceſſity, and confirmed by gratitude; yet as Mary and Anne both conſented to devolve their right to the crown on William, the convention may be ſaid only to have confirmed this transfer. This ſingle deviation excepted, the ſucceſſion was continued after the death of William and Mary in the natural order: in the children of Mary; in Anne; in the children of Anne; and in the children of William, who being the ſon of Mary, eldeſt daughter of Charles the Firſt, was, after Anne, the next in order of ſucceſſion*.

In 1689, the firſt parliament which was ſummoned by William and Mary confirmed this act of ſettlement; but the king, ever anxious to promote the tranquillity of his ſubjects, and to prevent thoſe future troubles which might ariſe, ſhould all the perſons named in that Act die without iſſue, thought it indiſpenſably neceſſary to extend it to the next heirs in the Proteſtant line. He ordered, therefore, biſhop Burnet to propoſe in the houſe of lords, an amendment to the bill of rights, nominating Sophia, dutcheſs of Hanover, and her iſſue, next in the ſucceſſion. Being carried by the lords without oppoſition, it was thrown out in the

* Blackſtone's Commentaries, Vol. 1. page 212.

houſe

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Period I. 1676 to 1714.

houſe of commons by the Republicans, high Tories, and Jacobites, who all united on this occaſion againſt a bill which equally confounded their reſpective hopes, under the ſpecious pretence that ſuch a nomination was unjuſt, becauſe it would preclude all thoſe who were prior in lineal deſcent to the dutcheſs, even ſhould they become Proteſtants*. The birth of the duke of Glouceſter, having ſtill farther removed the apprehenſions of a popiſh ſucceſſor, William did not chuſe to preſs the nation in favour of the Hanover line, but was ſatisfied in obtaining his views by a more concealed but not leſs effectual method. Inſtead of naming Sophia, a clauſe was annexed to the bill of rights, diſabling all Papiſts from ſucceeding to the crown, or ſuch as ſhould marry Papiſts. This clauſe firſt opened the proſpect of ſucceſſion to the houſe of Brunſwick, without naming it; becauſe that family, being the firſt among the Proteſtant deſcendants of James the Firſt, became, from the perpetual excluſion of Catholics, next in expectancy to the perſons named in the act of ſettlement. This remarkable clauſe paſſed, in both houſes, without oppoſition or debate, notwithſtanding the well-known diſinclination of the majority of the lower houſe; and the management of the whole affair reflects the higheſt honour on the judgment and temper of William.

Such was the order of ſucceſſion when Walpole came into parliament; at which time the recent

* Burnet, vol. 2. p. 15. Tindal, vol. 13. p. 144.

death

death of the duke of Glouceſter alarmed the nation with the dread of a Popiſh ſucceſſor, and enabled William to carry into execution his favourite meaſure of extending the act of ſettlement to the houſe of Hanover. Having been deceived by Louis the Fourteenth in the negociations for the ſecond partition treaty, he had diſmiſſed the Whig miniſters, who had rendered themſelves obnoxious by ſigning it, and formed a Tory adminiſtration, at the head of which were Rocheſter, Godolphin, and Harley, who, from being a violent partiſan of the Whigs, now ſided with their opponents.

William well knew that the greater part of the Tories had conſented with the utmoſt reluctance to the breach of hereditary deſcent at the revolution, and had almoſt uniformly oppoſed his endeavours in favour of Sophia, as tending, in their opinion, to overturn the ſyſtem of hereditary monarchy, ſo long cheriſhed by the conſtitution of England. He alſo well knew that the whole body of the real Whigs earneſtly promoted the transfer of the crown to the ſucceſſion in the Proteſtant line, but, at the ſame time, he was aware that among thoſe who called themſelves Whigs, were many Republicans, who would oppoſe it from a hope, that if the perſons named in the act of ſettlement ſhould die, means might be found to eſtabliſh their favourite form of government. He had long perceived that the Whigs themſelves could never have carried the bill which he had ſo much at heart, in oppoſition to the united force of the Tories, Jacobites, and Republicans; but he had

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now divided the Republicans from the Tories, by placing the latter in power, and being ſecure of the Whigs on this queſtion, he thought it a favourable opportunity to make the extenſion of the act of ſettlement with the miniſters the price of their elevation. He accordingly recommended in his ſpeech from the throne, February 1701, a further proviſion for the ſucceſſion of the crown in the Proteſtant line; notwithſtanding this acquieſcence of the Tories, he could not carry his point without the conſent of the princeſs Anne, who was at that time entirely governed by the dutcheſs of Marlborough; and the dutcheſs was highly incenſed againſt William, for having formerly arreſted the duke her huſband, and ſtill more for having publicly withdrawn his confidence from him. With a view therefore to counteract the influence of that artful favourite, and to gain the concurrence of Anne, he permitted inſinuations to be thrown out, as if he intended to make a ceſſion of his crown to the ſon of James the ſecond. Theſe artful rumours alarmed both the princeſs and her favourite, and extorted her conſent to the act of ſettlement *.

But although the Tories had promiſed the king to promote the extenſion of the Act of Settlement, before they came into power, and had even permitted a recommendation of it to be introduced into the king's ſpeech, yet the method in which they conducted the buſineſs, proved their wiſh to to obſtruct it. The ſpeech was made on the 11th

* Cunningham, vol. 1. p. 185. Somerville's Hiſtory of King William, p. 545.

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of February; the commons, in their addreſs, took not the leaſt notice of that part which related to the Proteſtant ſucceſſion; and it was not until the 3d of March that the houſe reſolved itſelf into a committee to take that ſubject into conſideration. Harley obſerved, that the haſte in which the government was ſettled at the revolution, had prevented the nation from requiring ſuch ſecurities from the future ſovereign, as would have prevented much miſchief; and he hoped they would not fall into the ſame error; he therefore moved, that before the perſon ſhould be named, a proviſion ſhould be made by a committee for the ſecurity of the rights and liberties of the people. This propoſal being accepted, the reſolutions of the committee were laid before the houſe, on the 12th of March, ſpecifying certain reſtrictions *, to be ratified by every future ſovereign.

Burnet,

* 1. All things relating to the well-governing of this kingdom which are properly cognizable in the privy council, by the laws and cuſtoms of this realm, ſhall be tranſacted there, and all reſolutions taken thereupon ſhall be ſigned by ſuch of the privy council as ſhall adviſe and conſent to the ſame. 2. No perſon born out of the kingdoms of England, Scotland, or Ireland, or the dominions thereunto belonging, or who is not born of Engliſh parents beyond the ſeas, although naturalized or made a denizen, ſhall be capable to be of the privy council, or a member of either houſe of parliament, or to enjoy any office or place of truſt. 3. No ſuch perſon ſhall have any grant of lands, tenements, or hereditaments from the crown to himſelf, or to any others in truſt for him. 4. In caſe the crown ſhall hereafter come to any perſon not being a native of the kingdom of England, this nation ſhall not be obliged to engage in any war for the defence of any dominions or territories not belonging to the crown of England, without the conſent of parliament. 5. Whoever ſhall hereafter come to the poſſeſſion of the crown, ſhall join in communion with the church of England. 6. No pardon under the great ſeal ſhall be pleadable to an impeachment in parliament. 7. No perſon who ſhall hereafter come to the poſſeſſion of the crown, ſhall go out of the dominions of England, Scotland, or Ireland, without the conſent of parliament. 8. No perſon who has an office or place of profit under the king, or receives a penſion from the crown,

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Burnet, whose reflections on the Tories cannot be admitted without extreme caution, observes, that these limitations were designed to disgust the king, and to raise disputes between the two houses, by which the bill might be lost *; although some of these restrictions were just, and highly beneficial, this observation is fully justified by the subsequent proceedings of the commons. So many delays were still made, that the patience of the Whigs began to be exhausted, and one of their party was going to propose the electress Sophia. Harley could only prevent this measure by bringing on the question. With a view, however, to cast a ridicule on the act of settlement, he employed Sir John Bolles, who was disordered in his senses, to propose the bill †. The business was so contrived, that this man thus deranged in his intellects, was, by the forms of the house, appointed one of the committee who were instructed to prepare the bill, was twice placed in the chair, and twice gave in the report. The first reading was postponed to the first of April, the second to the seventh, and it did not finally pass till the fourteenth of May. Thus the act of settlement, which was to secure the religion and constitution of the country, was received with so much coldness and contempt, that several members, during the sitting of the committee, indecently quitted the house, and so

crown, shall be capable of serving as a member of the house of commons. Judges' commissions shall be made quam diu se bene gesserint, and their salaries ascertained and established: But, upon the address of both houses of parliament, it may be lawful to remove them.

Journals of the house of commons.—Tindal.

* Vol. 2. p. 271. † Burnet.—Journals.

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so many delays were purposely made, that more than three months elapsed, from the day in which it was recommended from the throne to the time it was sent up to the lords. It passed that house after a slight opposition from the marquis of Normanby. Being carried back to the commons, it was received in a thin house, and several reproachful expressions were uttered against it by some of the members *. Chapter 2, 1700 to 1701.

After such a conduct, apparently calculated to render the bill odious and contemptible, what thanks can be given to the Tories, and to their idol Harley, for having in this manner brought forwards the act of settlement? Is it not evident that they had been drawn into a promise to support it by the artful management of William, and that they endeavoured to counteract the bill at the very moment when they appeared to promote it? The most zealous Whig, however, cannot presume to deny that the nation is highly indebted to the Tories for one of the limitations in the act of settlement, which the Whigs, with all their ardour for civil and religious liberty, would not have ventured to propose, because it was considered by the king as an insult on his conduct and administration. The restriction to which I allude is, that no foreigner, though naturalized, should be a member of the privy council, or of either house of parliament, or should enjoy any office or place of trust, or have any grant of lands from the crown. These necessary precautions, naturally suggested by the experience of those evils to which the nation had

* Burnet.—Tindal.—Oldmixon.

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been already expoſed, in conſequence of raiſing a foreign prince to the throne, proved highly beneficial in preventing, on the acceſſion of George the Firſt, the admiſſion of German denizens into the councils and cabinet of England.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

1701—1702.

Walpole ſoon becomes an active Member of Parliament.—Is upon various Committees, and Teller on ſeveral important Queſtions.—Supports the Whigs.—Seconds the Motion for extending the Oath of Abjuration to eccleſiaſtical Perſons.—Death and Character of King William.

Chapter 3. 1701 to 1702.

ALTHOUGH neither the Journals of the Houſe of Commons, nor any contemporary accounts, nor the traditions of his family, record that Walpole made any ſpecific motion, or ſpoke in favour of the act of ſettlement, yet there is no doubt that he joined the Whigs in promoting it.

1701. The Journals prove, that he ſoon became a very active member. His name appears upon ſeveral committees, and in one for privileges and elections, ſo early as the 13th of February, only three days after the meeting of the parliament in which he firſt ſat. He was particularly attentive to the buſineſs which related to the county of Norfolk; and zealouſly promoted the queſtions which concerned the trade of Norwich. He made the report from the committee on the bill for erecting hoſpitals and workhouſes in the borough of Lynn, and for better employing and maintaining the poor; and was ordered to carry it up to the houſe of lords.

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He is alſo mentioned as teller on ſeveral important queſtions which related as well to the trade and revenues of England, as to queſtions of party. Chapter 3. 1701 to 1702.

He was one of the tellers againſt the bill propoſed by the Tories for the better preſervation of the Proteſtant religion, and for preventing the tranſlation of biſhops from one ſee to another. April 23.

His high veneration for the character of Lord Somers, and his zealous attachment to his party, naturally induced him to oppoſe the motion for his impeachment, and it is not improbable that he afterwards took a conſiderable part in his defence. Being young and unexperienced at the period when that queſtion was moved, he gave only a ſilent vote, but he made a judicious remark, which proved his ſagacity: it was, that the zeal of the warmeſt friends is oftentimes more hurtful to the perſon whoſe cauſe they eſpouſe, than the bittereſt accuſations of the moſt inveterate opponents. The defence ſpoken by Somers in the houſe of commons was ſo able and perſpicuous, and made ſo deep an impreſſion, as induced Walpole to be of opinion, that if the queſtion had been immediately put, the proſecution would have been withdrawn. But the accuſers of Lord Somers, foreſeeing this event, made ſuch inconſiſtent obſervations, and uſed ſuch intemperate expreſſions, as provoked his friends to reply. According to the account of this debate, given by Walpole, Harcourt began with extremely fallacious, but as plauſible remarks, as the ſubject could admit. Cowper's indignation moved him to reply, which occaſioned April 14.

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the prolongation of the debate, at the end of which, what had been ſignificantly and fully urged by Somers, was in a great meaſure forgotten. But had the impetuous zeal of his friends been reſtrained, and his enemies been permitted to proceed without interruption, as long as they thought fit, Walpole apprehended they would have not been able to divide the houſe *. He was one of the tellers in favour of the queſtion, that the engroſſed replication to the anſwer of Lord Somers to the articles of impeachment, ſhould be read. On which motion, he divided with 90 againſt 140.

On entering into parliament, a due diffidence of his own powers repreſſed his zeal; and he formed a reſolution not to ſpeak until he had attained more experience, and ſome degree of parliamentary knowledge: but his prudence and caution were overcome by the powerful paſſion of emulation.

During his continuance at Eton, he had been the rival of St. John, who was a year younger than himſelf. The parts of St. John were more lively and brilliant; thoſe of Walpole more ſteady and ſolid. Walpole was induſtrious and diligent, becauſe his talents required application. St. John was negligent, becauſe his quickneſs of apprehenſion rendered leſs labour neceſſary. When both came into public life, this emulation did not ceaſe;

* The general account of this debate is accurately ſtated in Tindal's Continuation of Rapin, by the author, Dr. Birch, on the expreſs authority of Sir Robert Walpole himſelf. I have added other particulars from the authority of Etough. He derived his information from a conference which he had with Sir Robert Walpole October 31, 1734.

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and as they took different parties, oppoſition kindled their zeal. St. John ſoon diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the houſe of commons, and became an eloquent debater; repeated encomiums beſtowed on his rival, rouſed the ardour of Walpole, and induced him to commence ſpeaker ſooner than he at firſt intended. It does not, however, appear at what time, or on what occaſion, he firſt ſpoke in the houſe of commons; all that is known on that ſubject is, that the firſt time he roſe, he was confuſed and embarraſſed, and did not ſeem to realize thoſe expectations which his friends had fondly conceived. At the ſame time, another member made a ſtudied ſpeech, which was much admired. At the end of the debate, ſome perſons caſting ridicule on Walpole as an indifferent orator, and expreſſing their approbation on the maiden ſpeech made by the other member, Arthur Mainwaring, who was preſent, obſerved in reply, "You may applaud the one, and ridicule the other, as much as you pleaſe, but depend upon it, that the ſpruce gentleman who made the ſet ſpeech will never improve, and that Walpole will in time become an excellent ſpeaker *." The prediction of Mainwaring was ſoon verified. Walpole took a ſtill more active part in the debates of the enſuing parliament, which met on the 30th of December 1701; which being compoſed of a majority of Whigs, and acting under a Whig adminiſtration, whom William had again called to the helm of

* From Charles Townſhend, Eſq.

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government, was more congenial to his political opinions. Yet notwithstanding the preponderance of their interest, the Tories gained a victory in the choice of a speaker, of which lord Townshend takes notice in a letter to Walpole, who was detained at Houghton by the illness of his wife: "Mr. Harley has carried it from Sir Thomas Littleton, by a majority of four votes, which gives his party great encouragement, and is no small mortification to the Whigs. I am extremely sorry to hear my cousin has miscarried of a son, but I hope she is in no danger, and that we shall shortly have the happiness of seeing you here *." Walpole did not long delay taking his seat in the new parliament.

At this period, Louis the Fourteenth having, on the death of James the Second, acknowledged his son king of England, under the title of James the Third, William ordered his embassador, the earl of Manchester, to quit France, and in a speech to the new parliament, told them, "He need not press them to lay seriously to heart, and to consider what further means might be used for securing the succession of the crown in the Protestant line, and extinguishing the hopes of all pretenders, and their open and secret abettors." Animated by this exhortation, the commons addressed the crown not to make peace with France, until reparation was made for the great indignity offered by the French king, in declaring the pretended

* December 30.—Orford Papers.

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prince of Wales king of England, Scotland, and Ireland. The Whigs having now the power, abundantly teſtified their inclination to confirm the act of ſettlement by every means beſt calculated to favour the excluſion of the dethroned family. Accordingly, a bill for attainting the pretended prince of Wales, paſſed in both houſes with little oppoſition. Another for the ſecurity of the king's perſon, for the ſucceſſion of the crown in the Proteſtant line, and for extinguiſhing the hopes of the pretended prince of Wales, was carried with equal ſucceſs. A clauſe in this bill, well known under the title of the act of abjuration, enjoined all ſubjects to ſwear allegiance to the king, by the title of *lawful* and *rightful* king, and his heirs, according to the act of ſettlement: this oath was to be taken by all perſons in any office, truſt, or employment, and to be tendered by two juſtices of the peace, to any perſon whom they ſhould ſuſpect of diſaffection. Even this clauſe met with no oppoſition, and the great ſtruggle was confined to the queſtion, whether this oath ſhould be compulſory or free. The enemies of the Proteſtant ſucceſſion could not venture to oppoſe the oath of abjuration, but they exerted their whole ſtrength to render it null, by contending, that it ought not to be impoſed by force, but left to the option of every perſon to take or to decline it. The conteſt on this occaſion was ſo great, and the two parties ſo equal, that this important clauſe was only carried in a full houſe by one voice.

Chapter 3. 1701 to 1702.

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This great victory being thus obtained, it was thought proper to extend the oath to all eccleſiaſtical perſons, and members of the univerſities. Sir Charles Hedges accordingly moved for an addition to the clauſe, which ſhould comprehend all clergymen, fellows of colleges, and ſchool-maſters. Walpole having, during his reſidence at Cambridge, obſerved many inſtances where maſters and fellows of colleges had never taken the oath of allegiance, ſeconded the motion for this amendment, and it was carried without a diviſion; ſo effectual was the triumph of the Whigs, over the friends of the dethroned family. Horace Walpole alludes to his conduct on this memorable occaſion, in a letter from Cambridge *, in which he deſcribes the conſternation of the nonjurors, on being compelled to take the oath of abjuration, and the indignation which they expreſſed againſt his brother, for his zeal in promoting the Proteſtant ſucceſſion.

When the bill was moved in the houſe of lords, the Tories propoſed, and warmly ſupported an additional amendment, excuſing the peerage from the obligation of the oath. Nottingham particularly diſtinguiſhed himſelf in its favour, and ſpoke with ſo much agitation, that the tears fell from his eyes †. But the ſingular abſurdity and injuſtice of exempting the upper houſe from the ſame ſtrictneſs of engagements to which the lower houſe had conſented, met with the fate which it de-

* Feb. 28, 1701-2. See Correſpondence.
† Etough's Papers.

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ſerved: The motion was negatived. Although the Tories could not carry their queſtion, they ſucceeded in adding two amendments, with a view ſtill further to protract the buſineſs. The opponents of the Proteſtant ſucceſſion in the lower houſe, coincided with their intentions, for the bill ſent down to the commons, with theſe amendments, was not returned to the lords till the 3d of March. It was there detained ſeveral days, and was not ſent back to the commons till the 7th, on a Saturday *, in the hope of deferring it till the Monday; and as the king then lay upon his death bed, almoſt at the laſt extremity, ſuch a delay would have been fatal. But the precautions of William, and the vigilance of the Whigs defeated their well-laid ſcheme. The commons adjourned till ſix in the afternoon; in this interval, the king, who was ſo weak that he could not hold a pen in his hand, ſtamped his name to the commiſſion for paſſing the acts. When the commons met, a meſſage was brought from the lords, importing that the king had ſigned the commiſſion, and deſiring the houſe to come up. The ſpeaker, accordingly, accompanied as uſual with other members, went out, and returned with the report, that the royal aſſent had been given to the bill, and to two other acts. No event ever happened in a more critical moment; for William expired between eight and nine on the following morning. The laſt exerciſe of his kingly power, Chapter 3. 1701 to 1702. March 8.

* Journals of the Lords and Common.

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was his aſſent to the oath of abjuration, emphatically ſtyled, by the friends of the dethroned family, his *curſed legacy*. "Thus, obſerves a contemporary * author, he confirmed to poſterity, with his expiring breath, that liberty, civil and religious, for which during his life he had ſo often fought in the field; which he was indefatigably augmenting and eſtabliſhing in his parliament; which he was continually bringing to perfection in his councils, and which, on his acceſſion to the throne, he promiſed (as he faithfully performed) to ſecure againſt all future attempts to ſubvert it."

CHAPTER THE FOURTH:

1702—1710.

Acceſſion of Anne.—Walpole makes a Motion in Oppoſition to Sir Edward Seymour.—Diſtinguiſhes himſelf in the Proceedings on the Ayleſbury Election.—Noticed by Earl Godolphin, and the Duke of Marlborough.—Appointed one of the Seven Council to the Lord High Admiral.—Secretary at War, and Treaſurer to the Navy.—Nominated one of the Managers for the Houſe of Commons, upon the Proſecution of Sacheverel.—His Speech, and Publication on that Occaſion.

Chapter 4. 1702 to 1710.

IN the firſt parliament of queen Anne, Walpole was returned for Lynn Regis, where his family had long poſſeſſed a permanent intereſt. For this borough he was regularly choſen, until he was created earl of Orford.

Supports the Whigs.

Although he had ſpoken frequently in the houſe of commons, yet the firſt time in which he ap-

* Toland.

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pears upon record, on a public * queſtion, in the parliamentary debates, was on the 23d of December 1702, when Sir Edward Seymour having carried a reſolution to bring in a bill for the reſumption of all grants made in the reign of king William, and applying them to the ſervice of the Public; Walpole moved, that all the grants made in the reign of the late king James, ſhould alſo be reſumed; but his motion was negatived †. The propoſition of Sir Edward Seymour, directed againſt the Whigs, who had received the principal grants from king William, was ſupported by a Tory miniſtry, and eaſily paſſed through a Tory parliament; and the counter motion by ſo young a member, levelled againſt the grants made to the Tories, and in oppoſition to one of their great leaders, ſufficiently proved that Walpole was riſing into conſequence, and had decidedly enliſted himſelf under the banner of the Whigs ‡.

In

* Notitia Parliam.—Liſts of the Houſe of Commons in Chandler's Proceedings of Parliament.

† Journals of the Houſe of Commons. Tindal, v. 15. p. 474.

‡ As a proof of Walpole's activity, and an indication of the principles and party which he ſupported, I have extracted, from the Journals of the Houſe of Commons, the ſeveral queſtions in which he was teller, beſides thoſe already mentioned, until he was appointed ſecretary at war.

1702.—February 19th: Againſt a clauſe to be added to a bill, for the further ſecurity of his majeſty's perſon and government, that perſons who take upon them offices, ſhall not depart from the communion of the church of England.—February 26th: Againſt delaying to read the report of a committee, to conſider further of the rights, liberties, and privileges of the houſe of commons.—March 3d: In favour of a motion for an inſtruction to a committee on the bill for granting to his majeſty divers ſubſidies.—1703. January 5th: For an amendment to an addreſs, in reply to the queen's meſſage.—1704. —November 14th: Againſt leave to bring in a bill for preventing occaſional conformity.—December 14th: Againſt the ſaid bill.—December

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In the celebrated cauſe concerning the Ayleſbury election, Walpole diſtinguiſhed himſelf in an eminent degree, and attained an high eſtimation with his party. Complaints of great partiality and injuſtice in the election of members of parliament, had been continually urged againſt the ſheriffs in the counties, and returning officers in the boroughs, who often found pretexts for rejecting thoſe electors who voted againſt the members they eſpouſed. When theſe diſputes were brought before the commons, the houſe ſeldom entered into the merits of

1704.

January.

Ayleſbury Caſe.

2 the

cember 19th: Againſt an inſtruction to a committee, that they have power to receive a clauſe for the qualification of juſtices of the peace, in a bill for the better recruiting her majeſty's land forces, and the marines.—1705. January 16th: For a motion, that a bill be committed for appointing commiſſioners to treat of an union between England and Scotland, &c.—January 17th: For a queſtion, that towards the ſupply, a duty be laid upon all goods imported from the Eaſt Indies, Perſia, and China, into England, prohibited to be uſed in England, and from thence to be exported to Ireland, or any of the plantations.—January 27th: Againſt a bill, to prevent perſons who are entitled by their offices to receive any benefit by public annual taxes, from being members of parliament, while they are in ſuch offices.—February 21ſt: For an amendment in a bill for prohibiting all trade and commerce with France.—March 14th: Againſt a clauſe in an act for preventing the further growth of popery.—December 8th: Againſt a Motion for a committee to conſider of the reſolution of the lords, declaring thoſe who ſhould inſinuate the church to be in danger, enemies to the queen, the church, and the kingdom.—December 19th: For the ſecond reading of a bill, for better ſecurity of her majeſty's perſon and government, and the ſucceſſion in the Proteſtant line.—1706. February 4th: For an amendment made by the lords in the ſame bill.—February 13th: Againſt a clauſe to prevent irregular lifting of men, to be added to the bill for recruiting the army and marines.—1707. February 10th: For an amendment to a bill for ſecuring the church of England, as by law eſtabliſhed.—February 22d: Againſt a motion for an inſtruction to the committee on the Bill of Union, that the ſubjects of this kingdom ſhall be for ever free from any oath, teſt, or ſubſcription, within this kingdom, contrary to or inconſiſtent with the true Proteſtant religion of the church of England, as is already provided for the ſubjects of Scotland, with reſpect to their Preſbyterian government.—December 12th: For an amendment to the above bill.—1708. January 29th: For the adjournment of a debate on the Engliſh forces in the ſervice of Spain and Portugal, in 1707.

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the cauſe, but uſually decided in favour of the candidate who voted with the majority. It was no eaſy matter to apply a remedy for ſuch a glaring abuſe; becauſe all parties, when oppreſſed, made heavy complaints, and when certain of a majority forgot the grievance againſt which they had before ſo loudly exclaimed, and even excuſed themſelves on the neceſſity of retaliation. At length, after many attempts to obtain juſtice, Aſhby, a freeman, proſecuted William White, conſtable of Ayleſbury, for having refuſed to admit his vote at the election of burgeſſes. A verdict, with damages, was found in favour of Aſhby, but reverſed by the court of Queen's Bench. The cauſe being carried by appeal to the houſe of lords, the order of the Queen's Bench was ſet aſide, and the verdict given at the aſſizes confirmed. The Tories, who formed the majority of the commons, conſidering theſe proceedings as an encroachment on their privileges, and eſteeming that houſe the judge of ſuch queſtions as related to the election of its members, the ſolicitor-general, Sir Simon Harcourt, moved, "That the ſole right of examining and determining all matters relating to the election of members to ſerve in parliament, except in ſuch caſes as are otherwiſe provided for by an act of parliament, is in the houſe of commons; and that neither the qualification of the electors, or the right of the perſons elected, is elſewhere cognizable or determinable." The queſtion was debated with uncommon vehemence and ability; on the ſide of the Tories, principally by Harley, St. John, Harcourt,

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Harcourt and Sir Edward Seymour; on the ſide of the Whigs, by Sir Joſeph Jekyll, Cowper, King, the marquis of Hartington, and Walpole. He took a ſhort, but ſenſible part in the debate; and after arguing with much judgment againſt the motion, propoſed to omit that part of it which concerned the qualification of the electors. This amendment, ſeconded by the marquis of Hartington, was negatived by a majority of only eighteen, and the original queſtion carried.

Yet, although the Whigs were defeated, their arguments produced a ſtrong effect on the public mind. A general diſcontent prevailed againſt the ſeverity of the commons, for committing to Newgate Aſhby, and four other inhabitants of Ayleſbury, who had likewiſe ſued the returning officers; for preventing their having a Habeas Corpus, for addreſſing the queen not to permit a motion for a writ of error in the houſe of lords, which would have releaſed them from priſon, and for declaring all ſolicitors and council, who ſhould proſecute or plead in any ſuch cauſe, guilty of a high breach of privilege. The final deciſion of this important controverſy was ſuſpended by the perſeverance of the lords, who declared, that a writ of error was a matter of right, not of grace; by the ſteady determination of the queen not to obſtruct, in favour of the houſe of commons, the courſe of judicial proceedings in the courts of law; and by the manly oppoſition of lord chief juſtice Holt. Theſe contrary pretenſions produced a violent quarrel between the two houſes, which was terminated by

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by the diſſolution of parliament *. Although the queſtion was never revived, yet from this time, the houſe of commons conſidered itſelf as the ſole judge of the qualifications of electors, and of all other matters which related to the return of members. It was principally owing to theſe reſolutions, that the deciſions, in regard to controverted elections, were ſeldom regulated by the merits of the caſe, but became queſtions of perſonal or political expediency; nor was this abuſe corrected, until the act, known by the name of Grenville's Bill, referred to a committee, choſen by ballot, and acting upon oath, the final deciſion in all conteſted elections. Chapter 4. 1702 to 1710. (1770.)

At this period of his life, Walpole began to be held in high eſtimation by the great leaders of the Whigs, and was particularly noticed by the duke of Devonſhire, the earl of Sunderland, lord Halifax, and lord Somers. Among the perſons of his own age, with whom he entered into habits of cloſe intimacy, were James, afterwards earl Stanhope, Spencer Compton, afterwards earl of Wilmington, the marquis of Hartington, eldeſt ſon of the duke of Devonſhire, whoſe family uniformly proved themſelves his firm friends and adherents, and viſcount Townſhend, who was then juſt beginning to acquire political importance. But Walpole owed his riſe and conſequence leſs to his connections, than to his own talents and ſituation. A Highly eſteemed by his party.

* See Journals of the Lords and Commons.—Raymond's Reports, p. 938.—Proceedings in the great caſe of Aſhby and White, and in the caſe of the Ayleſbury men.—Chandler.—Tindal.

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Period I. 1676 to 1714. member of parliament of a great Whig family, whose interest brought in two * representatives, and who had distinguished himself in the debates for sound sense, manly argument, and perspicuous eloquence, could not long remain unnoticed. Nor was his reputation solely confined to the party whose cause he so warmly espoused. The lord treasurer Godolphin †, at a period when a Whig was his aversion, discerned his rising abilities, favoured him with his immediate protection, and strongly recommended him to the patronage of the Duke of Marlborough.

Noticed by Godolphin.

1705. The firm adherence of Walpole to his party, was, however, a hindrance to his preferment, as long as Godolphin continued to act solely with the Tories; but no sooner had the leaders of the Whigs regained their popularity, and appeared secure of a majority in the ensuing parliament, than the lord treasurer brought several into office, and opened to others a prospect of preferment.

March 1705. The duke of Newcastle was declared privy seal, in the room of the marquis of Normanby; and among the inferior places of government, Walpole was appointed one of the council ‡ to prince George of Denmark, lord high admiral of England. This first service was attended with many disagreeable circumstances: Great mismanagement both at home and at sea, was imputed to the navy

Appointed one of the council to the lord high admiral.

* One for Castle Rising, and one for Lynn Regis.

† From the late earl of Orford.—Etough's Summary Account of Sir Robert Walpole.

‡ Walpole Papers.—MS. account of Sir Robert Walpole, in King's College, Cambridge.—Collins's Peerage.

board.

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board. Admiral Churchill, brother to the duke of Marlborough, poſſeſſed, at this period, the greateſt influence at the admiralty, and was accuſed, with ſome of the other members, of negligence and corruption. To him the merchants attributed their loſſes; their loud complaints were heard in both houſes, and zealouſly ſupported by the principal Whigs. Walpole endeavoured to excuſe and mitigate the conduct of the council, and gave a proof of the ſpirit that marked the deciſion of his character. Being reproached by one of his friends for acting againſt his party, he replied, "I never can be ſo mean to ſit at a board, when I cannot utter a word in its defence *." But although he conceived, that it was unbecoming in him not to defend thoſe with whom he ſat in council, and although he well knew that their faults had been exaggerated, yet he found ſufficient abuſes to call for immediate correction. He laboured therefore to prove to the board, the neceſſity of aſſuming a more deciſive conduct; and he ſo far ingratiated himſelf with his fellow counſellors †, that his advice was followed, and his plans were uſually adopted.

Chapter 4. 1702 to 1710. June.

The union of ſpirit and prudence, in ſo young a man, ſtill further recommended him to the notice of Godolphin, who appears to have placed in him the moſt implicit confidence, and to have availed himſelf of his advice and aſſiſtance on many important occaſions.

* From the late lord Walpole, to the late earl of Hardwick.
† Etough's Account of Sir Robert Walpole.

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1705, October. New parliament.

At the meeting of the new parliament, Walpole ſeconded the motion, made by lord Granby, to nominate Smith ſpeaker, who was favoured by the Whigs, againſt Bromley, who was propoſed by the Tories. The conteſt was carried on with great heat and animoſity between the two parties; but the majority in favour of Smith proved the triumph of the Whigs.

Reconciles Godolphin with the Whigs.

Walpole had already exerted himſelf with conſiderable ſucceſs, in cementing this union between Godolphin and the Whigs; but he now came forward with ſtill greater effect, and ſtrenuouſly exhorted his patron to obtain the zealous co-operation of that powerful and popular party. He urged, that the leaders of the Tories in the houſe of commons, were directed and influenced by his enemies and rivals; and cenſured the ſpirit of bitterneſs and violence, of umbrage and perſecution, which had been lately prodominant in all their meaſures; he repreſented, in the ſtrongeſt terms, that the Tories, although they had been rouſed by the general energy of the nation to approve and ſecond the grand alliance, were yet averſe to the continuance of the war with France; and that on the contrary, the Whigs were not only ſincere, but enthuſiaſts in their zeal for the depreſſion of the houſe of Bourbon.

His repreſentations were liſtened to with attention, and gradually had their effect; Godolphin availed himſelf of his intimacy with Devonſhire, Halifax, Somers, and Townſhend, to arrange the coalition, which afterwards took place. If the union

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union of the Treaſurer with this party was not ſo complete and uniform as ſome of the zealous Whigs expected, the failure proceeded from his apprehenſions of the queen's diſpleaſure, his inclination to the principles of the Tories, and his affection for the dethroned family, which was never entirely obliterated. Chapter 4. 1702 to 1710.

In conſequence of theſe repugnant principles, the adminiſtration was a motley mixture of Tories and Whigs, perpetually at variance, and ſecretly caballing to ſupplant each other. At firſt the Tories ſeemed predominant in the cabinet; but the aſcendancy of the Whigs ſoon appeared, from the nomination of Cowper to be lord keeper of the great ſeal, in the room of ſir Nathaniel Wright; yet Harley ſtill continued ſecretary of ſtate, and through the means of Mrs. Maſham, was gradually undermining the influence of Godolphin and Marlborough. During theſe cabals, the leaders of the Whigs, perceiving that the queen favoured the Tories, forced Charles earl of Sunderland into the office of ſecretary of ſtate, in the place of ſir Charles Hedges, in direct oppoſition to the avowed wiſh of the queen, and in contradiction * to the ſecret inclinations both of Godolphin and Marlborough. The appointment of Sunderland was a decided victory, and from that moment the whole adminiſtration adopted the principles, and followed the meaſures of the Whigs. After ſome unavailing ſtruggles, Harley was diſmiſſed from the office of Changes in the cabinet. December 1706. Whig adminiſtration.

* Conduct of the Ducheſs of Marlborough.

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secretary of state, and succeeded by Henry Boyle, afterwards lord Carleton, who proved his friendship for Walpole, by appointing his brother, Horace, his private secretary; and the subsequent nomination of lord Somers to the presidentship of the council, completed the triumph of the party.

February 1708.

Appointed secretary at war.

Walpole himself was not overlooked in the change. He was selected by Marlborough as the most proper person to succeed his favourite, St. John, in the delicate office of secretary at war*; an office which required a person of no less prudence than ability. During the absence of Marlborough, the secretary at war transacted the business of the department personally with the queen; he was to correspond officially and confidentially with the commander in chief; and had the difficult task to conciliate the capricious temper of the duchess of Marlborough, who interfered in all business, governed her husband with the most absolute sway, and who now treated the queen with those marks of disrespect, which finally occasioned her own disgrace, and the fall of the Whig administration.

1709. Treasurer of the navy.

On the decease of Sir Thomas Littleton, Walpole was appointed treasurer of the navy, which office he held for a short time, with that of secretary at war.

In addition to his parliamentary abilities, Walpole endeared himself to Godolphin by activity and

* The office of secretary at war was destined to Cardonnel, confidential secretary to the duke of Marlborough; but as he was abroad with the duke, Walpole retained that place until his return.

punctuality

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punctuality in buſineſs, order and preciſion in accounts, great knowledge of finance, and the moſt engaging manners. The treaſurer admitted him into his moſt ſecret councils, entruſted him with the delicate office of compoſing the ſpeeches from the throne, and from the time of Harley's reſignation, committed to him the management of the houſe of commons *. Nothing will place the prudent and conciliating character of the young ſenator in a ſtronger light, than that Godolphin and Marlborough, who never cordially coaleſced with the Whigs, ſhould take into their confidence, one who had proved himſelf, and ſtill continued to prove himſelf, ſo ardently attached to that party; at the ſame time he was ſo far from forfeiting the favour of the Whigs, that he was equally beloved and truſted by their leaders.

Chapter 4. 1702 to 1710.

In 1710, Walpole was appointed one of the managers for the impeachment of Sacheverel, and principally conducted that buſineſs in the houſe of commons. To bring Sacheverel to a trial, and to diſtinguiſh him with an impeachment, managed in the moſt ſolemn manner, for a miſerable performance, which, without ſuch notice, would have ſpeedily ſunk into oblivion, was an inexcuſable degradation of the dignity of the houſe of commons, and affords a ſtriking inſtance of the height of folly and infatuation to which the ſpirit of party will carry even the wiſeſt men. It is well known that this meaſure was ſuggeſted by Godolphin, who was

Manager for the trial of Sacheverel. 1710.

* Etough's Account of Sir Robert Walpole.

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ſeverely ſatiriſed in the ſermon under the name of Volpone, and that it was warmly oppoſed by Somers and the Whig lords. Walpole, in conformity to their opinion, endeavoured to prevail on Godolphin to deſiſt from the proſecution; but all arguments were ineffectual. The miniſter, in this inſtance, laid aſide his uſual circumſpection, and irritated by a paſſion unworthy of the occaſion, inſiſted with ſo much vehemence, that he finally extorted the conſent of his colleagues in office.

Walpole, acting in conformity to their reſolutions, conducted himſelf on the occaſion with no leſs prudence than ſpirit. It fell to his ſhare to ſupport the firſt article of the charge; that Sacheverel had ſuggeſted and maintained, "That the "neceſſary means uſed to bring about the happy "revolution, were odious and unjuſtifiable; that "his late majeſty, in his declaration, diſclaimed "the leaſt imputation of reſiſtance, and that to "impute reſiſtance to the ſaid revolution, was to "caſt black and odious colours upon his late ma"jeſty and the ſaid revolution."

On this delicate ſubject, which it is ſo difficult to define and reſtrain within the proper bounds, while the doctrine of reſiſtance is allowed, in caſes of extreme neceſſity, he ſpoke with equal preciſion, moderation, and energy, and drew the happy medium between the extremes of licentiouſneſs and rational liberty; between a juſt oppoſition to arbitrary meaſures, and a due ſubmiſſion to a free and well-

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well-regulated government *. While he reprobated, in the ſtrongeſt terms, the doctrines of divine indefeaſible right, and paſſive obedience, he by no means encouraged, even in the ſlighteſt degree, any vague notions of reſiſtance in undetermined caſes, or upon trivial motives; but eſtabliſhed hereditary right as the eſſence of the Britiſh conſtitution, never to be tranſgreſſed, except in ſuch inſtances as juſtified the revolution. Chapter 4. 1702 to 1710.

The reſult of this ill-judged trial was far different from the event which Godolphin and his friends weakly expected. The triumph of the Tories was evident from the lenity of the ſentence, which only ordered, that the ſermon ſhould be burnt by the common hangman, and ſuſpended Sacheverel from preaching during three years. The unpopularity of the miniſters was highly increaſed; the inclination of the queen, in favour of their opponents, was oſtentatiouſly manifeſted; the populace was inflamed; and the conſequence of this act of imprudence and precipitation, was the downfall of thoſe who hoped to find, in the condemnation of Sacheverel, the revival of their popularity, and the eſtabliſhment of their power.

It may not perhaps, in this place, be improper to obſerve, that the fatal and miſchievous conſequences which reſulted from the trial of Sacheverel, had a permanent effect on the future conduct of Walpole, when he was afterwards placed at the

* This ſpeech, written in his own hand, is ſtill extant among the Orford Papers. The printed ſpeech, in the account of Sacheverel's trial, is taken from it verbatim. Burke has quoted a ſenſible paſſage of it in his Appeal from the new to the old Whigs, p. 65.

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head of adminiſtration. It infuſed into him an averſion and horror at any interpoſition in the affairs of the church, and led him to aſſume, occaſionally, a line of conduct which appeared to militate againſt thoſe principles of general toleration, to which he was naturally inclined.

Soon after the removal of the Whig adminiſtration, Walpole publiſhed a pamphlet on this * remarkable trial, entitled, Four Letters to a Friend in North Britain, upon the publiſhing the Trial of Dr. Sacheverel. The firſt letter ſtates the particulars which preceded the trial; the ſecond, thoſe which accompanied it; the third, thoſe which followed it; and the fourth diſplays the conſequences. The purport of this publication, was to prove in clear and familiar language, and by a plain, but ſtrong deduction of reaſoning, that the abettors of Sacheverel were the abettors of the Pretender; and that thoſe who agreed with him to condemn ſuch reſiſtance as dethroned the father, could have no other meaning than the reſtoration of the ſon.

* This pamphlet is erroneouſly attributed to Arthur Mainwaring, by Tindal, and the Biographia Britannica. See Royal and Noble Authors; Article, Earl of Orford.

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CHAPTER THE FIFTH:

1710.

Intrigues and Cabals which occaſioned the Removal of the Whig Adminiſtration.—Walpole holds a confidential Correſpondence with the Duke of Marlborough, Lord Townſhend, and Horace Walpole.—Rejects the Offers and deſpiſes the Threats of Harley.—Refuſes to take a Part in the new Adminiſtration.

Chapter 5. 1710.

Removal of the Whig adminiſtration.

WALPOLE now began to enjoy, in the poſſeſſion of an honourable and lucrative office, the reward of his able and uniform conduct, and had the pride of ſeeing his country ſucceſsful beyond the example of former ages, ſince the days of Elizabeth, under a great and wiſe adminiſtration, in which he bore an active part. Marlborough, Godolphin, Somers, Sunderland, Wharton, Cowper, Halifax, and Townſhend, occupied the firſt poſts of government, were united in the ſame cauſe, acted with the ſame views, and promoted the honour and advantage of England by the moſt vigorous and ſpirited meaſures. But he did not long feel this ſatisfaction, for at the very moment when the country was reaping the fruits of their wiſdom, foreſight, and energy, the miniſtry was removed. Had not this change taken place, the king of France muſt have accepted the terms of peace offered by England, and unequivocally compelled his grandſon, Philip, to renounce the crown of Spain. St. Simon* calls the intrigues which introduced a

* Memoires ſecrets du regne de Louis XIV, par Louis duc de St. Simon.

Tory

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Tory adminiſtration that ſaved France, *les miracles de Londres.* The king of Pruſſia *, alſo ſpeaking of Marlborough, ſays, "What! Hoechſtedt, Ramilies, Oudernarde, Malplaquet, were not able to defend the name of that great man; and even victory itſelf could not ſhield him againſt envy and detraction? What part," he adds, "would England have acted without that true hero? he ſupported and raiſed her, and would have exalted her to the pinnacle of greatneſs, but for thoſe wretched female intrigues, of which France took advantage to occaſion his diſgrace. Louis the Fourteenth was loſt, if Marlborough had retained his power two years more." In fact, the removal of the Whig miniſtry retarded, inſtead of accelerating the peace, becauſe it encouraged Louis the Fourteenth to break the congreſs of Gertruydenberg, threw the queen entirely into his power, and the prediction of Marlborough, in a letter † to Walpole, was eventually verified; "If the ſchemers are fond of a peace, they are not very dexterous, for moſt certainly what is doing in England, will be a great encouragement to France for continuing the war."

1710. There never was any event in the annals of this country attended with more diſgraceful conſequences to England, or followed by more fatal effects to Europe in general, than the diſmiſſion of thoſe great men, who formed that glorious and ſucceſsful adminiſtration in the reign of queen

* Dialogue Des morts Marlborough, Eugene, Lichtenſtein.

† See Correſpondence, June 23d, 1710.

Anne,

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Anne, called, by way of diſtinction, the Whig adminiſtration. Chapter 3. 1710.

Our regret at their fall is ſtill further heightened from the conſideration, that it was occaſioned by the overbearing temper of a miſtreſs of the robes *, and principally effected by the petty intrigues of a bed-chamber-woman †, againſt her benefactreſs. The ſurpriſing influence which the ducheſs of Marlborough had acquired over the weak and irreſolute mind of the good queen Anne, is well deſcribed in that extraordinary apology of her conduct, which the ducheſs gave to the public. We there find a princeſs of the moſt placid temper, faſcinated by the captivating manners of an artful, but agreeable woman; a queen, imbued with high notions of regal dignity, and a moſt exact obſerver of forms, throwing off all etiquette, and correſponding with her favourite, under the fictitious names of Morley and Freeman. We find the ducheſs, after having engaged the affections of her miſtreſs by the moſt aſſiduous attention, relapſing into groſs neglect, and gradually ſinking in favour. We find her at the ſame time either not perceiving, or ſtriving to conceal from others, and even from herſelf, the decline of her aſcendancy, and increaſing the diſguſt of the queen by her rude and intemperate behaviour. Unfortunately, the ducheſs of Marlborough had ſo much credit and power with the duke, her huſband, and Godolphin, that to remove her it became neceſſary to

* Ducheſs of Marlborough.
† Abigail Hill, Mrs. and afterwards lady Maſham.

remove

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remove the miniſtry, over whom ſhe poſſeſſed ſo ſtrong an influence. The artful and cautious manner by which Mrs. Maſham ſupplanted the ducheſs of Marlborough, is alſo related in this apology, which may be called a manual of court intrigues; and her cabals with Harley, are detailed in the writings of Swift, who derived his information on that ſubject, from the moſt unqueſtionable authorities.

The Whigs were beginning to loſe their popularity, when the trial of Sacheverel raiſed a ferment in the nation, and excited a general outcry againſt them. The miniſtry, and particularly the duke of Marlborough, were accuſed of protracting the war for their own intereſts; and this calumny was urged ſo boldly and repeatedly, that it was finally believed; the terms alſo, which the Britiſh plenipotentiaries attempted to exact from Louis the Fourteenth, though ſtrictly conſonant to true policy, and founded on the principles laid down at the commencement of the war, were declared illiberal, and only advanced to prevent that haughty monarch from acceding to them.

From an impartial review of the numerous papers, to which I have had acceſs, and from a diligent compariſon of the political writings of thoſe times, I feel the ſtrongeſt conviction, that the miniſtry were ſincere in propoſing the terms of peace at the congreſs of Gertruydenberg; that they were even anxious to lower the demands of the Dutch, and make them as moderate as were conſiſtent with the ſecurity of Europe, and that they were ſanguine in their

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their expectations that Louis the Fourteenth, circumſtanced as he then was, would accede to them. It alſo appears, from the Diary of Lord Cowper, that he was the only one of the miniſters who harboured a doubt on the ſubject, and that by expreſſing that doubt he incurred the indignation of Godolphin *. During the trial of Sacheverel, when

Chapter 5. 1710.

Intrigues of Harley.

* 23d Janry. 1709, Sunday, lord treaſurer at his houſe, read duke Marlborough's letter, dated abot 15 days before, from Hague; that Buys and 3 of the Burgrs of Amſterdam, and the Penſioner had recd ſometime ſince, by overtures of peace from France, vizt to quit Spain and the Weſt Indies, and to give a barrier to ſtates in Flanders, that 'twas a great ſecret, known only as above; that the Penſioner ſaid he ſhould be ruined if known he had kept it from the ſtates ſo long. Lord treaſurer ſaid, he ſhew'd it me by queen's order; I advis'd, and it was agreed only to put the propoſals more particularly, and at large, as ſoon as poſſible; ſeveral intermediate debates in cabinet, ſhew'd by lord treaſurer.

April 12, the following letter from duke Marlborough, Hague, April 19, 1709. The deputys of States Genl were with me yeſterday abot 2 hours, the which time was ſpent upon the ſubject of their barrier. After I had given them all the aſſurances I thought neceſſary of the intentions and inclinations of the queen and Engliſh nation, of concurring with them in what might be reaſonable for their barrier, I did endeavour to cure them of any jealouſy they might have of my being particularly concerned. I hope it has had a good effect with 'em; however, I have done all I can, and ſhall do ſo to keep them in good humour, if poſſible. The incloſed is what they deſire for their barrier. It incloſes what might be thought a great kingdom. I hope to perſuade them from ſome of it; ſo that I beg very few may ſee it: but when I have done all that may be in my power, I ſhall than ſend it to the ſecry, ſo that it may come regularly to her majeſty, and the cab. counc. Monsr Rouillie's meſſenger returned laſt night, but I am told he deſires two days to decypher his diſpatches; ſo that Tueſday will be the ſooneſt I ſhall be able to give you an account of this matter. This is ſo critical a time, that I dare not be of any opinion: but I tremble when I think that a very little impatience may ruin a ſure game. Barrier, Dendmd, Chateau de Ghent, Dame, Oſtend, Newport, Furnes, Knocq, Ipres, Menin, Liſle, Tournay, Condé, Mons, Valenciennes, Maubeuge, Charleroy, Namur, Luxemburgh, Liere, Haut-Geldre en propre, permiſſion to fortify Hall, St le Demer, the head of Flanders, with the forts on the Scheld, Huy, Leige, and Bon.

Note, during the remaining tranſaction of the intended peace, which was laid in all its ſteps before whole cabinet, lord treaſurer, lord preſident Somers, and all other lords, did ever ſeem confident of a peace. My own diſtruſt was ſo remarkable, that I was once pfectly chid by the lord

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Period I. 1676 to 1714. when their unpopularity increaſed, Harley was admitted, by the introduction of Mrs. Maſham, to ſeveral private interviews with the queen, in which he endeavoured to perſuade her to diſmiſs the miniſtry, but as ſhe was of a timid, procraſtinating diſpoſition, he had great difficulty in ſucceeding. Not being able to prevail upon her to take a bold ſtep, he artfully led her, by inſenſible degrees, to the accompliſhment of his ſcheme. With this view, he perſuaded her to conſult the duke * of Shrewſbury, whom he had previouſly gained, and in whom ſhe placed great confidence, on theſe points; "Would the public credit ſuffer by the change of adminiſtration? Could that meaſure be carried into effect without a diſſolution of parliament? or would that diſſolution be attended with danger? Could a peace be negotiated with ſafety to the queen, and with honour to the allies?"

The duke of Shrewſbury having given his opinion in the affirmative, and ſupported the queen in her reſolution, Harley perſuaded her to appoint earl Rivers lieutenant of the Tower, in oppoſition to the recommendation of Marlborough †, and to beſtow a regiment, vacant by the death of the earl of Eſſex, on Mr. Hill, brother to Mrs. Maſham. As the promotion of this officer was

lord treaſurer, never ſo much in any other caſe, for ſaying ſuch orders would be proper if the French king ſigned the preliminary treaty. He reſented my making a queſtion of it, and ſaid there could be no doubt, &c. For my part, nothing but ſeeing ſo great men believe it, could ever incline me to think France reduced ſo low as to accept ſuch conditions.—Lord Cowper's Diary; Hardwicke Papers.

* Life of the Duke of Shrewſbury.

† Swift's Memoirs relating to the Change in the Queen's Miniſtry, v. XV. p. 20.

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highly disagreeable to the duchess of Marlborough, and must tend to lessen the duke's weight and authority in the army, he remonstrated in person, and urged his objections in such a manly and spirited manner, as displeased the queen, and induced her to answer, that he would do well to advise with his friends. Godolphin having no less ineffectually represented to her, that the duke's long and faithful services deserved a more favourable treatment, Marlborough retired in disgust to Windsor, and wrote a high spirited, but indiscreet letter, in which, after stating his readiness to obey her commands, he expressed his regret that all his services could not protect him from the malice of a bedchamber woman, and requested instant permission to retire. Before the queen had received this letter, she became apprehensive lest the resignation of the duke at this critical juncture, should cause discontents in the nation, and alarmed at the threats of Sunderland, to propose in the house of lords the removal of Mrs. Masham, ordered Godolphin to inform Marlborough, that he might dispose of the regiment. In reply to his letter, she also expressed her concern at what had passed, and by this condescension engaged him to continue the command of the army in Flanders. But although the queen yielded in this instance, she persevered in her intentions, and soon afterwards gave unequivocal proofs of her resolution, by dismissing the marquis of Kent from the post of lord chamberlain, and conferring that office on the duke of Shrewsbury, against the inclinations of the ministry.

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Walpole corresponds with Marlborough.

During these transactions Walpole maintained an official and confidential correspondence with the duke of Marlborough, while absent from England; with Lord Townshend, plenipotentiary at the congress of Gertruydenberg; and with his brother Horace Walpole, private secretary to Lord Townshend. The whole of this interesting correspondence is not extant, but a sufficient part is still preserved * to do honour to the persons who were engaged in it, to throw a new light over the transactions of that period, and to illustrate the conduct of the ministers on that memorable occasion. It shews that their fall was owing no less to their own disunion, than to the intrigues of Mrs. Masham and Harley, and the opposition of the Tories. It plainly appears to have been the opinion of Walpole, that more active and decisive measures should have been pursued before the removal of Sunderland. He lamented the division of the ministry, the jealousy and coldness of Godolphin, who would not make any attempt to save Sunderland; he conjectured that his disgrace would be followed by the dismission of Godolphin and Marlborough, which they did not foresee, or else their disinclination to Sunderland overcame the apprehensions which they ought to have entertained for their own safety.

Laments the disunion of the Whigs.

Walpole was at that time in a subordinate situation. He had great obligations both to Godolphin and Marlborough, and he was joined in opinion with the Whig leaders. He had therefore a

* See Correspondence, Period I.

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very delicate part to act; yet he wrote to Marlborough with great spirit and freedom; and even ventured to advise him not to offend the queen, by refusing obstinately to promote the husband and brother of Mrs. Masham; although such advice was most likely to offend, as in fact it did offend, the duchess of Marlborough. It appears also from these letters, that Marlborough and Godolphin meanly tampered with the duke of Shrewsbury, and attempted, through his influence over the queen, to prevent the dissolution of the parliament; instead of boldly and manfully coming forward, they acted this underhand part, and suffered, by this dilatory and equivocal conduct, Harley to divide and disunite the Whigs. Chapter 5. 1710.

Perhaps it may be conjectured, that if on the dismission of Sunderland, which was sure to be followed by other changes, notwithstanding the positive assurances of the queen to the contrary, Godolphin and all his friends had instantly resigned their places, and if the duke of Marlborough had given up his command of the army, so unanimous and bold a measure would have dispirited the queen, and alarmed the Tories. Under these impressions she could not have ventured to make a sudden and total change; she would probably have been checked by the apprehension of alienating the whole party of the Whigs, who then formed a large majority in parliament, and of disgusting the monied men, many of whom made the public credit personal to Godolphin, and scrupling to ad-

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vance money upon the faith of the nation, offered it upon his ſingle word *. She would have dreaded the remonſtrances of the emperor and the Dutch, who juſtly conſidered the great ſucceſſes of the war as principally owing to the military talents of Marlborough.

Such was the opinion of Walpole; and Sir Richard Temple, afterwards Lord Cobham, expreſſed his ſentiments in favour of a general reſignation, in a ſpirited letter to his friend Walpole, with whom he then acted, and by whom he had been ſtrongly recommended to the duke of Marlborough. But, both Walpole and his brother Horace foreſaw and lamented that the Whigs, inſtead of adopting this deciſive and manly conduct, would be divided among themſelves, and that ſeveral would liſten to the inſidious overtures of Harley. In effect, that artful miniſter flattered them with the hopes that the parliament would not be diſſolved, and repreſenting the danger which would threaten the conſtitution and religion, ſhould their whole body deſert the queen, he uſed the remarkable expreſſions, "That a Whig game was intended at the bottom," and that his great object would be to promote the Proteſtant ſucceſſion †.

Theſe repreſentations and promiſes had a due effect, and helped to break the phalanx, which, had it remained firm and compact, muſt have been invincible.

* Life of the duke of Shrewſbury.
† Cowper's Diary; Hardwicke Papers.

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Many of the Whigs hesitated, and delayed their resignation. Newcastle remained in power until he was removed. The duke of Somerset was persuaded by the queen to keep his place, but affected to declare that he would not attend the privy council; and even Halifax, the stern champion of the party, is said to have availed himself of his long acquaintance with Harley, and to have so effectually treated with him in private, that none of his own relations were displaced *. Marlborough retained the command of the army only to be dismissed with ignominy †, when his services were no longer thought necessary. Devonshire, Henry Boyle, Wharton, Somers, and Cowper, were among the few leaders who resigned with spirit and dignity. Chapter 5. 1710.

Lord Chancellor Cowper, in particular, behaved with unexampled firmness and honour. He rejected with scorn all the overtures which Harley made, in the most humble and supplicating manner, to induce him to continue in office. When he waited on the queen to resign, she strongly opposed his resolution, and returned the seals three times, after he had laid them down. At last, when she could not prevail, she commanded him to take them; adding, I beg it as a favour of you, if I may use that expression. Cowper could not refuse to Resignation of Lord Cowper.

* Cunningham's History of Great Britain, vol. 2. p. 305. Letter from Horace Walpole to Etough, September 21st, 1752. See Correspondence, Period II.

† The manner in which Marlborough was treated by the new ministry, appears by two letters from Bolingbroke to Drummond. See Correspondence, Period I. 1711.

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obey her commands; but after a ſhort pauſe, taking up the ſeals, he ſaid that he would not carry them out of the palace, except on the promiſe, that the ſurrender of them would be accepted on the morrow. "The arguments on my ſide," to uſe the words of Lord Cowper himſelf, "and profeſſions, and the "repeated importunities of her majeſty, drew this "audience into the length of three quarters of an "hour *." On the following day, his reſignation was accepted, and ſoon afterwards the ſeals were given to Sir Simon Harcourt.

Walpole rejects the overtures of Harley.

Walpole acted on this occaſion an honourable and diſintereſted part. In the wreck of this great adminiſtration, Harley, deſirous of retaining in power ſeveral of the Whigs, with a view to counterbalance the credit of St. John and Harcourt, who already began to give him umbrage, endeavoured to gain Walpole. He made very flattering advances; told him that he was worth half his party †, and preſſed him to continue in adminiſtration; but all his efforts proved ineffectual.

Harley finding at laſt that promiſes and flattery were employed without avail, had recourſe to threats. Hawes, one of his confidential emiſſaries, who was afterwards receiver of the cuſtoms, informed Walpole, that the treaſurer had in his poſſeſſion a note for the contract of forage, indorſed by him; this inſinuation was made in ſuch a manner, as to imply, that if Walpole would come over to the new miniſtry, this note ſhould not be pro-

* Cowper's Diary.

† Letter to Mr. Pulteney, in anſwer to his Remarks, p. 42.

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duced againſt him. But he, no leſs diſdainful of menaces than before he was regardleſs of promiſes, rejected all overtures. In a letter * written on the 19th of September, he obſerves to his friend General Stanhope; "I believe, in all probability, this "will be the laſt letter I ſhall write from this of- "fice. We are in ſuch a way here, as I cannot "deſcribe. But you can imagine nothing worſe "than you will hear. The parliament is not yet "diſſolved, but this week will certainly determine "it. Dear Stanhope, God proſper you, and pray "make haſte to us, that you may ſee what you "will not believe if it were told you." A few days after writing this letter, he retired from the office of ſecretary at war.

Sept. 29. Retires from the office of ſecretary at war.

Harley, however, was not repulſed by the firſt refuſal of Walpole to ſupport his adminiſtration. He had too much ſucceſs with many of the Whigs, not to exert every effort to gain a man whoſe talents and eloquence he held in the higheſt eſtimation. He ſuffered him to continue in his place of treaſurer of the navy, ſeveral months after the Whig miniſtry were entirely routed. He ſent ſeveral meſſages, and held ſeveral converſations with him, to perſuade him to moderate his oppoſition againſt the new meaſures; but his conſtant anſwer was, "Make a ſafe and honourable peace, and preſerve "the Proteſtant ſucceſſion, and you will have no "oppoſition †."

* Walpole Papers.

† Etough's Papers; Horace Walpole to Etough, Oct. 14, 1752.

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CHAPTER THE SIXTH:

1711—1713.

Conduct of Walpole in Oppoſition.—Ably defends the late Adminiſtration againſt the Charge of not accounting for the Public Expenditure.—Accuſed of Breach of Truſt and Corruption when Secretary at War.—Committed to the Tower.—Expelled the Houſe, and incapacitated from ſitting in the preſent Parliament.—Viſited by Perſons of the firſt Diſtinction and Abilities.—Writes an able Defence of himſelf.

Chap. 6. 1711 to 1713. Supports the late adminiſtration.

As Walpole dignified and ſupported an adminiſtration proſperous at home and glorious abroad, ſo when it was vilified and diſgraced, he made animated replies to the attacks of a powerful and irritated party. During the intervening period, from his reſignation to the death of queen Anne, he perſevered in attachment to his late aſſociates, and in haraſſing the new miniſters, with great ability, both in and out of parliament. The firſt inſtance in which he appeared the champion of the fallen party, was upon the motion of an addreſs to the queen. On this occaſion, Walpole, whom Swift, in his hiſtory of the four laſt years of queen Anne, calls *one* Mr. Robert Walpole, propoſed an amendment to the addreſs, importing that no peace can be honourable to Great Britain and Europe, if Spain and the Indies are to be allotted to a branch of the houſe of Bourbon. This clauſe, which had been carried by the lords, was negatived in the houſe of commons by a very great majority.

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Chapter 6, 1711 to 1713.

But his ſubſequent efforts were ſtill more important and uſeful. The Tories having attempted to arraign the meaſures of their predeceſſors in office, turned their principal objections againſt the management of the revenue; a topic on which it was moſt eaſy to delude the public mind, by introducing a ſeries of complicated calculations. This attack was principally levelled againſt Godolphin, who was accuſed of having profuſely laviſhed the public money, and of not having accounted for the ſums voted by parliament. When ſeveral of his former adherents in the houſe of commons deſerted the ex-miniſter, a few defended his cauſe, and argued that the clamours raiſed againſt him, were merely the effuſions of malice and calumny. The inſidious attack was maſqued under the plauſible appearance of appointing a committee for examining and ſtating the public accounts. St. John employed all the powers of his eloquence, to ſhew the neceſſity of taking into conſideration the national expenditure; maintained that none but thoſe who were enemies to their country, or who would themſelves plunder the treaſury, would be ſo bold as to oppoſe the inquiry; and ſupported his arguments with the moſt ardent affectation of zeal for the church and conſtitution.

Speaks in favour of Godolphin.

No ſooner had St. John ceaſed ſpeaking, than Walpole roſe with great ſpirit to vindicate his patron from the imputation of corruption and malverſation. He did not, however, condeſcend to make any reply to the hypocritical aſſeveration of St.

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St. John, in regard to religion, but confined his remarks to the ſubject of debate. He explained, in a calm and diſtinct manner, the accounts of the public expenditure, and confirmed the truth of his report, by the original receipts, and the moſt authentic teſtimonies. After having proved that the inquiry was founded on party animoſity, he concluded by obſerving, "If he is accuſed, who cannot be charged with any crime, or any juſt ſuſpicion of a crime, and whom the member who ſpoke laſt could neither fear nor hate, take heed leſt the conſtitution ſhould receive a wound through his ſides. It is obvious, how much the multitude is under the influence of bribery, it is obvious, that the people of England are at this moment animated againſt each other, with a ſpirit of hatred and rancour. It behoves you, in the firſt place, to find a remedy for thoſe diſtempers, which at preſent are predominant in the civil conſtitution, and unleſs you reject this inquiry with becoming indignation, I leave you to conjecture the ſituation to which this kingdom and government are likely to be expoſed *." But the zeal and eloquence of Walpole had no effect; for the committee was appointed, conſiſting of perſons principally Tories, and two notorious Jacobites; all previouſly determined to arraign the proceedings of the former adminiſtration. The reſult of their inquiry was given in a moſt extraordinary report, which paſſed the houſe on the 12th of April, and

Report of the committee.

* Cunningham's Hiſtory of Great Britain, vol. 2. p. 349, 350.

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was presented to the queen on the same day. After stating the great arrears due from public taxes, many embezzlements and scandalous abuses, evil mismanagement in public offices, and misapplication of parliamentary supplies, it boldly asserted, "That of the monies granted by parliament, and "issued for the public service to Christmas 1710, "THERE REMAINS UNACCOUNTED FOR, THE "SUM OF £.35,302,107. FOR A GREAT PART "OF WHICH NO ACCOMPTS HAVE SO MUCH AS "BEEN LAID BEFORE THE AUDITORS; and for "the rest, though some accompts have been brought "in, yet they have not been prosecuted by the "accomptants, and finished." This unqualified reproach cast by the house of commons on the ex-ministers, had for a short time a prodigious effect in increasing the unpopularity of the Whigs. The people conceived it to be impossible, that the commons would advance such an assertion, without the most convincing proofs in its favour. A general belief gained ground, that the nation had been deceived and betrayed; fresh confidence was placed in the new ministers, who thus displayed their care for the people, and proved their capacity by contriving such means as might ascertain and discharge so vast a debt.

Chapter 6. 1711 to 1715.

In opposition to these accusations, Walpole again came forth as the champion of his colleagues, and published "The Debts of the Nation stated and "considered," and the "Thirty-five Millions accounted for." In these publications, the author, who is called by Arthur Mainwaring, *the best master*

Answered by Walpole.

of

Period I. 1676 to 1714. *of figures of any man of his time*, gave, in a ſmall compaſs, ſo accurate a ſcheme of the public debts, eſpecially of the navy, together with the management of the revenues, the anticipations, the debts, and the reaſons and neceſſity of them, as entirely undeceived the public, and refuted the calumnies which had been ſo induſtriouſly raiſed *. He proved, in a clear and ſatisfactory manner, that the debt of the navy, which was eſtimated at £. 5,130,539, did not exceed £. 574,000; and that of the whole £. 35,000,000, all but £. 4,000,000 had been accounted for.

Walpole had diſtinguiſhed himſelf too ably in the houſe of commons, and by his publications had proved himſelf too warm a friend of the fallen miniſtry, and too powerful an adverſary to the reigning adminiſtration, not to be ſingled out as one of the ſacrifices to be made at the ſhrine of party vengeance. His expulſion, therefore, from the houſe of commons was reſolved, and a meeting held by the leaders of the oppoſite party for the purpoſe of conſulting on the means of proceeding. But the injuſtice of this act was eſteemed ſo flagrant, and the imputations of guilt ſo faint and falſe, that many of thoſe who had united to overturn the late adminiſtration, declared their averſion to this malicious deſign. Bromley †, however, removed their ſcruples, by declaring that the expulſion of Walpole was the *unum neceſſarium*,

* Conduct of Robert Walpole, eſquire, from the beginning of the reign of queen Anne, to the preſent time, 1717, p. 29.—Tindal.—Oldmixon.

† Letter from Horace Walpole to Etough, September 21, 1751.

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as they could not carry on the buſineſs, if he was ſuffered to continue in the houſe. It is no wonder, therefore, that his enemies, who could command a majority, ſhould find a plauſible pretext. The commiſſioners of public accounts laid a charge of venality and corruption againſt him for forage-contracts in Scotland while he was ſecretary at war. They accuſed him of having taken, in two contracts, two notes of hand, one for 500 guineas, the other for £. 500, the firſt of which had been paid, and a receipt given in his name, and of the other £. 400 was paid. It appeared, from examining of the witneſſes, on oath, that the contractors, rather than admit into their partnerſhip Robert Mann, agent for Walpole, who, according to the tenour of the original agreement, reſerved a ſhare for a friend, to have a benefit of the fifth part, if not redeemed by the contractors with a ſum of money, had preferred paying the 500 guineas and £. 500; and that Mann had received the money for the firſt note, and had obtained the ſecond note as a depoſit for the ſum ſpecified to be paid.

Chapter 6. 1711 to 1713.

Accuſed of corruption.

December 21.

In conſequence of theſe reports, Walpole was heard in his own defence, though no particulars of his ſpeech are preſerved in the proceedings of parliament; after he had withdrawn, a warm debate took place, which laſted till paſt ten at night. His friends, on this occaſion, ſupported him with ſo much zeal, that the houſe was divided four times in the ſame ſitting; and the miniſters, who carried all political queſtions in this ſeſſion with only

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only a trifling oppoſition, gained the motions for his condemnation and expulſion, by a ſmall majority. On the firſt diviſion, in which Pulteney, then his intimate friend, afterwards his moſt bitter opponent, was teller, the amendment, to leave out the words, "and notorious corruption," was negatived by a majority of 52. The main queſtion paſſed in the affirmative by 57. The motion for committing him to the Tower by only twelve; and his expulſion was decreed by 22*. Theſe ſmall majorities ſufficiently prove, either that Walpole poſſeſſed great perſonal influence in the houſe, or that many of the Tories conſidered his accuſation a ſcandalous proſecution, and would not give their votes againſt him. The houſe, however, reſolved, "That Robert Walpole, eſquire, was guilty of a high breach of truſt, and notorious corruption: That he ſhould be committed priſoner to the Tower of London;" and on a ſubſequent motion, which was carried only by a majority of twenty-two votes, That he ſhould be expelled †.

Expelled the houſe.

Committed to the Tower.

On the next morning, Walpole ſurrendered himſelf a priſoner, and was committed to the Tower. It was expected, that he would have petitioned, and ſubmitted himſelf to the cenſure of the houſe; but he refuſed making any conceſſion, which could imply a conſciouſneſs of guilt, and

* 1ſt. 155 againſt 207. 2d. 148—205. 3d. 156—168. 4th. 148—170. The motion of cenſure againſt the duke of Marlborough was carried by a much greater majority, 270 againſt 165.—Journals.

† Journals.—Chandler's Debates.

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he therefore remained a priſoner until the prorogation of parliament. In the mean time a new writ being iſſued for Lynn, he was re-choſen for that borough; but a petition being made againſt the return, by Samuel Taylor, the oppoſing candidate, the commons reſolved, "That having been expelled this houſe for an high breach of truſt in the execution of his office, and notorious corruption, when ſecretary at war, he was incapable of being re-elected a member to ſerve in the preſent parliament *.

Viſited by perſons of diſtinction.

While he remained a priſoner, he was conſidered as a martyr to the cauſe of the Whigs, and repeatedly viſited by perſons of the higheſt diſtinction and abilities, particularly by the duke and ducheſs of Marlborough, Godolphin, Sunderland, Somers, and Pulteney; and his apartment exhibited the appearance of a crouded levee †.

Publiſhes his defence.

During his confinement, he had ſufficient leiſure to compoſe a clear and judicious vindication of himſelf, which was publiſhed under the title of "*The Caſe of Mr. Walpole, in a Letter from a Tory Member of Parliament to his Friend in the Country.*" In this maſterly defence, he fully juſtifies himſelf, and appeals to evidence, taken upon oath, againſt the two principal charges, high breach of truſt, and notorious corruption. In regard to high breach of truſt, he ſhews that he had no advantage in the contracts; that he was not the only perſon concerned in making them, and that they were

* Journals.—Chandler's Debates.

† Life of the Duke of Shrewſbury.—Annals of Queen Anne, for 1712, p. 140.—Conduct of Mr. Walpole.—Anſwer to a ſcurrilous Libel.

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ſettled on the beſt and moſt advantageous terms to be obtained at the time. In reply to the charge of notorious corruption, he proves that a ſhare in the contract being given to his friend, Robert Mann, the contractors preferred paying him a ſum of money in recompence for his ſhare; that the contractor, who had negociated this bargain with Mann, dying, the other not knowing his name, made the note of hand payable to Walpole or order, for the uſe of his friend; that the note was endorſed by himſelf only for form, and the money received by Mann was for his own uſe and benefit, and that Walpole had not the leaſt intereſt, directly or indirectly, in this affair.

I have been thus particular in ſtating the defence of Walpole, becauſe it gives ſtrong proofs of his innocence, and was never fairly and candidly anſwered; becauſe ſome of the very perſons who viſited him in priſon, and not only defended but applauded his conduct in this inſtance, afterwards, when in oppoſition, reproached him with the commiſſion of this very crime, of which they had publicly and formally abſolved him; and becauſe ſome late * writers, of different principles, have ſtigmatiſed his memory, without having ſufficiently examined his defence †.

This

* See Smollet, vol. 2. p. 209. Macpherſon's Hiſtory, vol. 2. p. 537.

† For the inveſtigation of this inquiry, in which the honour and character of Sir Robert Walpole is involved, I have conſulted and compared the Journals of the Houſe of Commons, Proceedings in Parliament, Burnet, Tindal, Oldmixon, Caſe of Mr. Walpole, Conduct of Robert Walpole, eſqu're, and An Anſwer to the Character and Conduct of Robert Walpole, eſquire, with an exact account of his popularity, publiſhed in 1717. In this laſt publication, the author endeavours to refute

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This impriſonment has been called the prelude to his riſe; and lord Lanſdowne, who was afterwards conſigned to the ſame apartment, wrote theſe lines under Walpole's name, which he had left on the window:

Good unexpected, evil unforeſeen,
Appear by turns, as fortune ſhifts the ſcene;
Some rais'd aloft, come tumbling down amain,
And fall ſo hard, they bound and riſe again *.

A popular ballad, compoſed by Eaſtcourt the player, in honour of Walpole, during his impriſonment, proves the high eſteem in which he was then held by his party, and predicted, with a true prophetic ſpirit, his future greatneſs. Eaſtcourt's ballad.

On the Jewel in the Tower.

1.

If what the Tower of London holds
Is valu'd for more than its power;
Then counting what it now enfolds,
How wondrous rich is the ſame *Tower*.

2.

I think not of the armory;
Nor of the guns and lion's roar;
Nor yet the valu'd library;
I mean the Jewel in the *Tower*.

refute Walpole's defence of himſelf, and to ſhew that the money paid to Mann was for Walpole himſelf, but as all his accuſations amount to mere aſſertions and conjectures, without the ſmalleſt evidence of the fact, it is only here mentioned as a proof that I have not examined only *one* ſide of the queſtion.

* Walpole's Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors, V. II. p. 128. Lanſdowne's Poems.

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3.

This jewel late adorn'd the court,
With excellence unknown before;
But now being blown upon in ſport,
This Jewel's caſe is now the *Tower*.

4.

State lapidaries there have been,
To weigh and prove and look it o'er;
The very faſhion 's worth being ſeen,
Th' intrinſic, more than is the *Tower*.

5.

'Tis not St. George's diamond,
Nor any of his partner's ſtore;
It never yet to ſuch belong'd,
Which ſent this Jewel to the *Tower*.

6.

With thouſand methods they did try it,
Whoſe firmneſs ſtrengthen'd ev'ry hour;
They were not able all to buy it,
And ſo they ſent it to the *Tower*.

7.

They would have prov'd it counterfeit,
That it was right 'twas truly ſwore;
But oaths, nor words, cou'd nothing get,
And ſo they ſent it to the *Tower*.

8.

It's brilliant brightneſs who can doubt,
By Marlborough it was ſometimes wore;
They turn'd the mighty maſter out,
Who turn'd this Jewel into the *Tower*.

9. Theſe

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9.

These are the marks upon it found,
King William's creſt it bears before,
And Liberty's engraven round,
Though now confin'd within the *Tower*.

10.

Nor France in it an intereſt has,
Nor Spain with all its golden ore;
For to the queen and high allies,
Belongs this Jewel in the *Tower*.

11.

The owners modeſtly reſerv'd
It in a decent Norfolk bower,
And ſcarce yet think it has deſerv'd
The Cæſar's honour of the *Tower*.

12.

The day ſhall come to make amends,
This Jewel ſhall with pride be wore,
And o'er his foes, and with his friends,
Shine glorious bright out of the *Tower*.

Lady Walpole *, who had a pleaſing voice, uſed to ſing this ballad with great ſpirit and effect, and was particularly fond of dwelling on the laſt verſe, at the time when the prophecy was fulfilled; when the priſoner

"*O'er his foes, and with his friends,*
"*Shone glorious bright out of the Tower.*"

* From Lord Orford.

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CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

1712—1714.

Releaſed from his Impriſonment.—Exertions in favour of his Party.—Publiſhes various political Pieces.—Eulogium of him, by Godolphin.—Publiſhes the Hiſtory of the late Parliament.—Re-elected for Lynn.—Speaks againſt the Peace; the Treaty of Commerce; and the Schiſm Bill:—In favour of Sir Richard Steele, for printing the Criſis and the Engliſhman.

1712. June 21. Releaſed.

THE miniſtry having protracted the ſeſſion by adjournment *, inſtead of ending it by prorogation, merely to detain him in priſon, Walpole was not releaſed until the 8th of July. From that period till the diſſolution, which took place on the 8th of Auguſt 1713, being incapacitated from ſerving his party in the houſe of commons, he exerted himſelf in maintaining the union of the Whigs, in conciliating the leaders, often diſcordant in their opinions, jealous of each other, or lukewarm in their conduct. He was a principal director of their counſels, and the great manager of their deliberations. The magnanimity and cheerfulneſs with which he acted and ſuffered, his liberality in expending large ſums in procuring intelligence, and promoting the Proteſtant ſucceſſion, the hoſpitality with which he entertained his political aſſociates, endeared him to the party, animated their counſels, and contributed to preſerve

* Journals.—Hiſtory of his Adminiſtration, p. 16.

them

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them from defection. The heavy expences incurred by theſe means, injured his private fortune, and involved him in pecuniary embarraſſments; a circumſtance which perhaps gave riſe to, or at leaſt ſanctioned the report, afterwards induſtriouſly circulated by oppoſition, of his being a needy adventurer, who had not credit enough to raiſe an hundred pounds on his own ſecurity *. The gratitude he afterwards diſplayed to thoſe perſons who accommodated him with money at a conſiderable riſk, does honour to his character.

Political publications.

During this period, he ably employed his pen in the ſervice of his party. He aſſiſted Steele in ſeveral political pamphlets †; and publiſhed an anſwer to the vote of the houſe of commons, that the ſtates general had been deficient in their proportion of troops, and that the queen had paid ſubſidies to the amount of three millions of crowns above the ſum ſtipulated.

September 1712.

His zeal and exertions were ſo conſpicuous, that he received a flattering teſtimony of eſteem, in a viſit which he paid to Godolphin, while confined with his laſt illneſs at St. Alban's, in the houſe of the ducheſs of Marlborough. The dying ſtateſman turning to the dutcheſs, who ſtood by his bedſide, ſaid to her, "If you ever forſake that young man, and if ſouls are permitted to return from the grave to the earth, I will appear to you and reproach you for your conduct ‡."

* Pulteney's Reply to Sedition and Defamation Diſplayed, p. 8.—An Anſwer to one Part of an Infamous Libel, &c. p. 34.

† Macpherſon's Papers, vol. 2. p. 511.

‡ From the late earl of Orford.

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The diſſolution of the parliament at length taking place, Walpole's incapacity was removed, and he was again choſen for Lynn. While the elections were depending, it was the opinion of Somers, and the Whig lords, that to ſtate to the people, in a ſtrong and perſpicuous manner, the proceedings of the late parliament, with a view to expoſe the meaſures of the miniſtry, and to guide the electors in the choice of the new repreſentatives, would be highly advantageous to their party. As no one ſeemed better calculated for this office than Walpole, he undertook a pamphlet, at their deſire, on the Thurſday, and publiſhed it on the Tueſday following *, under the Title of, A Short Hiſtory of the Parliament, with the motto:

Publiſhes the Hiſtory of the laſt Parliament.

Venalis Populus, venalis Curia Patrum.

To this publication is prefixed, a dedication by Pulteney, then his coadjutor, compoſed in a ſtrain of irony and humour peculiarly his own, and in which, though addreſſed to an anonymous peer, it was eaſy to perceive that the earl of Oxford was the object of alluſion.

The pamphlet tends to prove, that the proceedings of the parliament had been directly contrary to the honour and advantage of England. The author defends the meaſures of the late adminiſtration with great ability; and after refuting the cenſures paſſed on Marlborough and Townſhend, inſtances his own caſe, and deſcribes himſelf as

* Article, Earl of Orford, in Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors, in which many of his other pamphlets are enumerated.

ſharing

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ſharing the honour of an impeachment with thoſe illuſtrious men. His animadverſions on the conduct of the parliament, were made with ſo much freedom and aſperity, that it was not deemed prudent to entruſt them to a common printer. Walpole himſelf, at a ſubſequent period, expreſſes the apprehenſions of the danger he might have incurred, had the author been diſcovered. "There is a noble lord in the other houſe, who can, if he pleaſes, inform gentlemen, that the author of that hiſtory was ſo apprehenſive of the conſequences of printing it, that the preſs was carried to his houſe, and the copies printed there *."

In the new parliament, which met on the 16th of February, Walpole, deriving freſh luſtre from his late temporary eclipſe, diſtinguiſhed himſelf with more than uſual ability. He warmly oppoſed the peace; the foundation of the South Sea company; the treaty of commerce with France; the ſchiſm bill: and in all theſe inſtances he proved his conſummate knowledge and experience in affairs of the moſt complicated nature, and greatly embarraſſed the ſpeakers on the ſide of government. 1714.

He was alſo particularly active in defence of Steele, who had rendered himſelf obnoxious to the miniſters by his bold writings on the ſide of the Whigs, and was accuſed by auditor Foley, Sir William Wyndham, and the Tories, of having publiſhed the Engliſhman and the Criſis. The Defence of Steele.

* Chandler's Debates, April 13, 1738.—Probably the peer alluded to was lord Cobham.

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rage of party was ſo violent on this occaſion, that an attempt was made to compel Steele to withdraw, without entering into his own defence, but this unjuſt propoſition was over-ruled without a diviſion, though it occaſioned a debate of ſome length, in which Walpole took an active part.

March 18.

The motion, that he ſhould be permitted to make his defence to the imputed libel, paragraph by paragraph, was, however, determined againſt him. He then entered on his defence, with a temper, modeſty, and eloquence quite unuſual to him, and continued ſpeaking three hours. After he had withdrawn, no member on the ſide of the miniſtry attempted to anſwer him; and auditor Foley only obſerved, that without amuſing the houſe with long ſpeeches, it was plain to every body, that the writings complained of, were ſeditious and ſcandalous, injurious to her majeſty's government, the church, and the univerſities; and moved for the queſtion. This motion occaſioned a warm debate, in which Walpole bore the moſt active and principal ſhare. Among other bold animadverſions, he obſerved, That this violent proſecution ſtruck at the liberties of the ſubject in general, and of the members of that houſe in particular; juſtified Mr. Steele on all the heads of the accuſation raiſed againſt him; and ſaid, he hoped the houſe would not ſacrifice one of their members to the reſentment and rage of the miniſtry, for no other crime than expoſing their miſmanagements, and, like a good patriot, warning his countrymen againſt the immihent dangers with which

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the nation in general, and in particular her majesty's sacred person were threatened, by the visible encouragement that was given to the Pretender's friends. In this defence, Walpole asked the house, "Why the author was answerable in parliament for the things which he wrote in his private capacity? And if he is punishable by law, why is he not left to the law? By this mode of proceeding, parliament, which used to be the scourge only of evil ministers, is made by ministers the scourge of the subject. The ministers, he added, are sufficiently armed with authority; they possess the great sanction of rewards and punishments, the disposal of the privy purse, the grace of pardoning, and the power of condemning to the pillory for seditious writings; powers consistent with, and naturally arising from their exalted situation, and which they cannot too jealously guard from being perverted to answer indirect or criminal purposes. In former reigns, the audacity of corruption extended itself only to judges and juries; the attempt so to degrade parliament was, till the present period, unheard of. The liberty of the press is unrestrained; how then shall a part of the legislature dare to punish that as a crime which is not declared to be so by any law, framed by the whole? And why should that house be made the instrument of such a detestable purpose; that house, which had to boast the honourable distinction of being applied to, as the source of redress, in all cases of oppression? Steele, he observed, has advanced nothing which bears a direct

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direct criminal construction; nothing which can be construed into guilt without the assistance of forced inuendoes; and shall parliament assume the ungracious part of thus inferring guilt from mere arbitrary construction? If they do, what advantage to government or the community can be expected ro result from such a measure? Are doctrines refuted, and truths suppressed, by being censured or stigmatized?—In the reign of James, it was criminal to say, that the king was a Papist; but the severity of the law, or the cruelty of its ministers, could not eradicate from the mind of a single individual, the confirmed belief of the fact. Steele is only attacked, because he is the advocate for the Protestant succession; the cause which he so ably defends, gives the offence; through his sides the succession is to be wounded; his punishment will be a symptom, that the succession is in danger; and the ministry are now feeling the pulse of parliament, to see how far they may be able to proceed. Does Mr. Steele, he inquired, incur any blame for writing against Popery? In the reign of James, indeed, preaching against Popery was considered as casting a reflection on the ministry. But it was not so in the reign of king William. From what fatality does it arise, that what is written in favour of the Protestant succession, and was countenanced by the late ministry, is deemed a libel on the present administration? General invectives in the pulpit against drinking, fornication, or any particular vice, have never been esteemed a reflection on particular persons, unless these

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theſe perſons are guilty of the darling ſin againſt which the preacher inveighs. It becomes, then, a fair inference, from their irritability and reſentment againſt its defender, that the darling ſin of the preſent adminiſtration is to obſtruct the Proteſtant ſucceſſion. If a Papiſt, nay an Iriſh Papiſt, who for many years has been a ſervant to the late king James, and the Pretender, (meaning Sir Patrick Lawleſs) one who has borne arms againſt her majeſty in France and Spain; one who is ſtrongly ſuſpected of having embrued his hands in the blood of the late duke of Medina Celi, and marquis of Leganez; if ſuch a man be not only permitted to come into England, but to appear at court, in the preſence-chamber; if he be careſſed by the miniſters; nay, I ſpeak it with horror, if ſuch a man be admitted into her majeſty's private audience, in her cloſet, will not every good ſubject think her perſon in danger? And is it then a crime in Mr. Steele to ſhew his concern for ſo precious a life?" *

Chapter 7. 1713 to 1714.

The miniſters, however, carried their point; the Criſis and Engliſhman were voted ſeditious libels, and Steele was expelled the houſe †.

The ſpeech of Walpole on this occaſion procured him great applauſe; but the public did not know, that the defence made by Steele himſelf, was in a great degree the offſpring of his eloquence;

* The principal part of this ſpeech is taken from memorandums, in the hand writing of Sir Robert Walpole; Orford Papers.—Chandler.

† Steele afterwards publiſhed, "An Apology for himſelf and his Writings occaſioned by his Expulſion from the Houſe of Commons," which, with a becoming gratitude, he dedicated to Walpole.

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a fact related by biſhop Newton, on the authority of Pulteney *. "When Steele was to be expelled the houſe of commons, Mr. Walpole and Mr. Pulteney, and Mr. Addiſon, were commiſſioned to go to him, by the noblemen and members of the Kit Kat Club, with their poſitive order and determination, that Steele ſhould not make his own ſpeech, but Addiſon ſhould make it for him, and he ſhould recite it from the other's writing, without any inſertion or addition of his own. Addiſon thought this an hard injunction, and ſaid, that he muſt be like a ſchool-boy, and deſire the gentlemen to give him a little ſenſe. Walpole ſaid, that it was impoſſible to ſpeak a ſpeech in cold blood; but being preſſed, he ſaid he would try, and immediately ſpoke a very good ſpeech of what he thought proper for Steele to ſay on the occaſion; and the next day in the houſe made another ſpeech as good, or better, on the ſame ſubject; but ſo totally different from the former, that there was ſcarce a ſingle argument or thought the ſame; which particulars are mentioned as illuſtrious proofs of his uncommon eloquence."

* Life of Biſhop Newton, by himſelf.

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CHAPTER THE EIGHTH:

1714.

Zeal of Walpole for the Hanover Succeſſion.—Juſtification of his Conduct, on the Preſumption that the Proteſtant Succeſſion was in Danger.—Public Alarms and Apprehenſions.—Death of Queen Anne.

Chapter 8. 1714.

THE great queſtion, in which Walpole appears to have always exerted himſelf with unabated zeal, was on the ſtate of the nation with regard to the danger of the Proteſtant ſucceſſion. In the courſe of this debate, Bromley, ſecretary of ſtate, having attempted to prove the negative, by repreſenting the endeavours of the queen to ſecure that object, and to remove the Pretender from Loraine; Walpole, with great ſpirit and warmth, avowed his opinion, that although the queen herſelf afforded no cauſe of apprehenſion, yet much was to be dreaded from the dubious conduct of ſome perſons, and therefore inſiſted that her name ſhould not be introduced. 1714. Declares the Proteſtant ſucceſſion in danger.

The zeal of Walpole on this ſubject, was by no means adopted from a ſpirit of oppoſition, and was not a ſudden ſpark ſtruck out by the circumſtances of the moment: it was a leading principle which had regulated his political conduct from his firſt entrance into life; it had been inſtilled into him by education, and matured by reaſon and reflection, to which he uniformly adhered in all ſituations and under all circumſtances.

If his object in ſpreading theſe alarms was to diſtreſs government, and to excite tumults againſt the Examination of his motives.

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the miniſters, he acted a falſe and wicked part; but if he really had reaſon for his ſuſpicions, he muſt be juſtified by every principle of attachment to the religion and conſtitution of the country. He can only be fully vindicated from the conviction, that it was the ſecret wiſh and reſolution of the queen to exclude the Hanover family, and to reſtore the Pretender, and that the miniſters were diſpoſed to co-operate with her inclinations. At the period of which we are now ſpeaking, the ſtrongeſt ſuſpicions were entertained, that ſuch a ſcheme was in agitation, and thoſe ſuſpicions have been ſince verified by the moſt authentic documents.

Intrigues in favour of the Pretender.

It was natural to ſuppoſe, that as the queen had no ſurviving iſſue, her affection for her brother, of whoſe legitimacy ſhe appears never to have entertained a doubt, would ſuperſede her inclination to a foreign family. She had often declared that ſhe did not conſider the crown as her right, and the impreſſions of conſcience naturally led her to atone for the wrongfulneſs of her poſſeſſion, by permitting it to reſume its ancient courſe of deſcent. In theſe ideas, ſhe was encouraged by her favorite, Mrs. Maſham; and when, by the intrigues of that artful woman, the chief impediment to her projects, the aſcendancy of the Whig party, was removed, ſhe entertained them with leſs reſerve, and employed herſelf aſſiduouſly to give them effect. Harley, who had ſucceeded in dividing the Whigs, ſo as to prevent them from exerting their united force in a conſiſtent oppoſition, yet found he could not carry on

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on the government, and make a peace, without the assistance of the Jacobites: a direct communication was opened between the court of St. Germain's, and that of London; the Pretender addressed a pathetic letter * to the queen, urging his own right to the crown, in which every soothing effort of supplication and submission was employed, and every appeal made to family pride, to tenderness, and justice, which could be supposed to influence a mind naturally benevolent and just, and which was beginning, through lassitude and perplexity, to seek some repose from the multiplied cares of a stormy government. Under these sinister auspices, the peace of Utrecht was made; a peace which confounded the characters of victors and vanquished, and in which the grand objects of the war were completely relinquished. The interests of the Pretender were kept in view, rather than those of the country, and the queen was anxious that the French king should not be deprived of the power of affording him effectual assistance.

The establishment of the Protestant religion was the only motive which could counteract the bias of the queen's mind in favour of her brother. The influence of that consideration was much diminished by her dislike to the family destined to succeed her; a prejudice which induced her to resist all approach of them to her person, and to oppose the applications of the electress Sophia, for a writ to call up the electoral prince to the house of

* Macpherson's Papers, vol. 2.

peers;

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peers; a prejudice ſo well known to thoſe who poſſeſſed her confidence, that Mrs. Maſham made no ſcruple to declare to the French miniſter, whom Louis the Fourteenth ſent to treat for peace, that the Hanover family *was all their averſion* *, and that it was the wiſh of the queen, that matters ſhould be ſo arranged that juſtice might at ſome time take place. Thoſe who favoured the cauſe of the Pretender, were ſo anxious to avail themſelves of theſe favourable appearances, that they adviſed him, either in ſhew, or in fact, to renounce his religion, to withdraw himſelf from the protection of the French king, to marry a Proteſtant, and reſide in Sweden. Matters were carried ſo far, that ſome of his ſanguine partiſans adviſed him to go to Scotland, and others even projected a plan for his being preſented by the queen to the parliament, and publicly acknowledged as her ſucceſſor †. Meetings were alſo held, both in town and country, to promote the repeal of the act of ſettlement, and to veſt in the queen the power of nominating a ſucceſſor. Theſe ſchemes were directly over-ruled, or indirectly counteracted by Harley, who, notwithſtanding his junction with the Jacobites, for the ſole purpoſe of making a peace, and maintaining his ground againſt the Whigs, does not appear ever to have wiſhed to fruſtrate the proviſions of the act of ſettlement. His conduct at length made ſuch an impreſſion on that party, that through their intrigues he was

* Macpherſon's Papers, vol. 2.
† See Memoires de Berwick.

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dismissed from administration, on a suspicion of lukewarmness or duplicity, and Bolingbroke, who was supposed to be more implicitly devoted to their interests, was recommended as his successor by the duke of Berwick, natural son of James the Second, and the Pretender's agent with the disaffected in England. Chapter 3. 1714.

The Whigs apprized of these intrigues.

These intrigues were too public and notorious to escape the knowledge of the friends to the Protestant succession; Sir Robert Walpole *, in the latter period of his life, frequently declared that the leaders of the Whigs were fully apprized of them, and that he, in particular, drew his information from two persons who were present at a meeting in the country between the chiefs of the ministry and the leading men of both houses. Their deliberations turned on the manner of invalidating or repealing the act of succession. An actual repeal, and a positive declaration of the Pretender's right, was moved by some: it was recommended by others, to leave to the queen a full power to nominate her successor by will.

Arguments of the other party.

Those who treat the danger of the Protestant succession as chimerical, observe in reply to these inferences, that from the time of the Revolution, many of the ministers had corresponded with the Pretender and his family; some of them with the connivance of the sovereign on the throne, and probably with a view of discovering the schemes of the Jacobites. On similar principles it may be

* Etough's Minutes of a Conference with Horace Walpole, at Putney, August 6 and 20, 1752.

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Period I. 1676 to 1714.

conjectured, that Bolingbroke * and Ormond might alſo have caballed with Berwick and the agents of the Pretender, with a view only of obtaining the diſmiſſion of Oxford, and the ſupport of the Jacobites; and might, as ſoon as they had ſecured themſelves in their places, have followed the example of Oxford. In corroboration of this argument, it appears from a letter of Eraſmus Lewis to Swift †, that Bolingbroke, at this period, courted the principal leaders of the Whigs, and Walpole ‡ himſelf admitted that Bolingbroke had held a meeting with them for the purpoſe of arranging the terms of a coalition, at which he gave the moſt poſitive aſſurances of his good wiſhes to the Proteſtant ſucceſſion; but when it was inſiſted, that as a proof of his ſincerity, the Pretender ſhould be removed to ſuch a diſtance as would prevent his interference in the affairs of England, he declared his inability to obtain the conſent of the queen, to what ſhe deemed the baniſhment of her brother. To attempt to fathom the politics, and unqueſtionably trace the deſigns of the artful and unprincipled Bolingbroke, would be difficult, even at this time, when party prejudices have ſubſided, and when many lights have been thrown on his conduct. But at the period here alluded to, the taſk was impracticable. How could the Whigs diſcriminate whether his intrigues with Marlborough, and his attempts to open a negotiation with

* See Macpherſon's Papers, vol. 2. p. 529—534.

† Swift's Letters, vol. 1. Letter 150.

‡ Etough's minutes of a conference with Sir R. Walpole.

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ſome of their leaders, were intended merely to counteract the deſigns of Oxford, or to deceive them; or whether his correſpondence with Berwick and the Pretender, was carried on with the view to promote or fruſtrate their ſchemes?

Refuted.

But ſuch conjectures do not ſtrictly apply to the queſtion in agitation, Whether intrigues were not employed to ſet aſide the Hanover line, and to induce the queen to aſſiſt in placing the Pretender on the throne? That ſimple fact is incontrovertible, and affords a juſtification of the Whigs, and of thoſe Tories who were friends to the Hanover line, that having knowledge of ſuch cabals, or even entertaining ſtrong preſumptions of them, they ſhould uſe every means to defeat thoſe attempts. They were bound in duty to propoſe ſuch ſtrong meaſures as would awaken the Proteſtants to a ſenſe of their danger, and force the queen and miniſtry to conſent to ſuch acts, as were moſt likely to ſecure the ſucceſſion; and they were to come forwards repeatedly and continually, that the paſſions of men might not be ſuffered to ſleep, and that the danger might be made manifeſt to the diſcernment of the public. They are therefore ſufficiently vindicated for ſetting a price on the Pretender's head; for conſulting with the agents of Hanover; for adviſing Baron Schutz to demand the writ for the electoral prince to be called to the houſe of peers, and for inſiſting that he ſhould be permitted to reſide in London, although Oxford told the duke of Kent, that to bring over one of the electoral family, would be to expoſe the queen's coffin to her view.

Friends of the ſucceſſion vindicated.

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Period I. 1676 to 1714. Alarming ſtate of affairs.

The laſt ſix months of the reign of Anne, was a fearful period; big with alarms, during which the kingdom ſtood on the "*perilous edge**" of domeſtic commotions and foreign invaſion. The nation was divided into three parties, each differently intereſted in regard to the Hanover line. The Jacobites, hoſtile and exulting; the Tories, diſaffected, neutral, or lukewarm; the Whigs, always active, yet occaſionally deſponding, anxious to avoid a civil war, yet determined to hazard their lives and fortunes in ſupport of their religion and conſtitution; and it is impoſſible to read the Stuart and Hanover Papers, in Macpherſon's Collection for 1714, and the Memoirs of Berwick, and of the duke of Hamilton, without ſhuddering at the dangers which ſeemed likely to burſt forth from the violence of thoſe parties, and the colliſion of diſcordant opinions.

The earl of Cheſterfield† was firmly convinced, that if the queen had lived three months longer, the religion and liberties of this country would have been in imminent danger. The patience of the Whigs was nearly exhauſted; their apprehenſions increaſed, and they were induced to form aſſociations for the protection of their religion and liberties; the people caught the alarm; many of the Tories began to ſee the danger, and to act in conjunction with the Whigs for the general ſecurity.

At this important criſis, the queen was ſeized with a ſudden ſtroke of apoplexy, which took away

* Milton.

† Life of Lord Cheſterfield, p. 13.—Letter to Mr. Jumeau.

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her senses, and soon occasioned her death. Although she had dismissed Oxford, she had not yet nominated his successor; and while Bolingbroke and his party were wavering, the dukes of Argyle and Somerset entered the council chamber without being summoned, and moved for an examination of the physicians. The queen being pronounced in great danger, they represented that it was necessary to fill up the place of lord treasurer, and the duke of Shrewsbury was proposed. The whole board assenting, the queen, during a lucid interval, delivered to him the white staff. The privy counsellors being summoned, Somers, and other friends to the Protestant succession, made their appearance *; and every precaution was taken to quiet the public mind, and to ensure the accession of the elector of Hanover. Anne expired on the first of August 1714; and Bolingbroke expresses himself in a † letter to Swift, dated August 3; "The earl of Oxford was removed on Tuesday; the queen died on Sunday. What a world is this, and how does fortune banter us!"

Chapter 8. 1714.

Death of Queen Anne.

* Tindal.

† Swift's Letters, vol. 1. p. 507.

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PERIOD THE SECOND:

From the Acceſſion of GEORGE the Firſt, to the Commencement of the South Sea Scheme:

1714—1720.

CHAPTER THE NINTH:

General State of the European Powers at the Death of Queen Anne, with reſpect to their Inclination or Capacity to promote or obſtruct the Acceſſion of George the Firſt.—State of Great Britain.—Character of George the Firſt—not calculated to promote his Cauſe.

Period II. 1714 to 1720.

NO Prince ever aſcended a throne under more critical circumſtances, and with leſs appearance of a quiet reign, than George the Firſt; whether we conſider the ſtate of the European powers, the ſituation of parties in Great Britain, or his own character.

State of Europe.

Moſt of the European powers were at this critical juncture, from motives of prejudice, alliance, or perſonal diſlike, averſe to the intereſts of the elector of Hanover; and thoſe who had not taken a decided part againſt him, with the exception of Pruſſia and Holland alone, were indifferent, or incapable of ſhewing their friendſhip.

France.

Although Louis the Fourteenth had guaranteed, at the peace of Utrecht, the right of the houſe of Hanover to the crown of Great Britain, and on the demiſe of Anne had acknowledged George the Firſt, yet it was well known that his attachment to the

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the Roman Catholic religion, his jealouſy of England, and a ſpirit of magnanimity which he greatly affected, would lead him to aſſiſt, if poſſible, the unfortunate prince, whom he had once publicly received as the lawful ſucceſſor of James the Second. Though too much exhauſted by the late war, to follow his inclinations by an active interference, he connived at the preparations making by the Pretender within his dominions; and ſhould any domeſtic inſurrections take place, ſo as to give hopes of ſucceſs, he was ready to pour in the whole force of France to promote a reſtoration. Chapter 9. 1714.

Spain, at this period, was little more than a province of France, and her ſovereign Philip the Fifth acted in perfect ſubordination to the will of his grandfather Louis the Fourteenth, to whoſe aſſiſtance he was principally indebted for the crown. He nouriſhed a violent antipathy to the elector of Hanover, and though prudence and neceſſity induced him to acknowledge him king of Great Britain, yet his principles and wiſhes inclined him to favour the Stuarts. Spain.

John the Fifth reigned in Portugal, a prince who poſſeſſed greater talents and activity than any of the ſovereigns of the line of Braganza. But he was already involved in a war with Spain, and though he had ſome confidence in the promiſes of aſſiſtance from George, yet he depended more on the mediation of France, and was, of courſe, liable to be biaſſed by the cabinet of Verſailles. Portugal.

The emperor Charles the Sixth, the head of the houſe of Auſtria, diſappointed as well as incenſed The Emperor

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Period II. 1714 to 1720.

at the manner in which the peace of Utrecht had been concluded, maintained a gloomy reſerve with reſpect to the affairs of England, and might fairly be ſuppoſed rather inimical than otherwiſe to the intereſts of George, whoſe growing influence in Germany, he watched with a jealous circumſpection. He well knew that the party in England, which favoured the acceſſion of the houſe of Brunſwick, was extremely weak, and believed that the Elector himſelf was indifferent to his elevation; on theſe accounts he was unwilling to offend his competitor by too great an oppoſition to his intereſt *. In conſequence of theſe motives, he refuſed †, at the peace at Raſtadt, to guaranty the ſucceſſion of the family of George the Firſt to the crown of Great Britain.

Pruſſia.

The moſt powerful among the German princes was Frederic William king of Pruſſia, who was included in the entail of the act of ſettlement, and who had eſpouſed Sophia Dorothea, the daughter of George the Firſt. Upon the firſt news of Anne's illneſs, he repaired to Hanover, and aſſured his father-in-law, the elector, that he would aſſiſt him with all his forces to maintain his title to the Britiſh throne. But the Pruſſian monarch had not yet eſtabliſhed, on a firm baſis, his great ſyſtem of military tactics, and his whole force could only tend to preſerve the electorate of Hanover, without affording any effectual aſſiſtance to

* Macpherſon's State Papers, vol. 2. p. 638.

† Lord Townſhend to Count Starenberg; Goerde, October 24, 1725.

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the king of Great Britain for reſiſting external enemies, or curbing internal oppoſition. Chapter 9. 1714.

The United Provinces, enfeebled by exertions above their ſtrength, bending under a vaſt load of debt, conſidering themſelves ſhamefully deſerted by England, and unwilling to contract new engagements which might again expoſe them to freſh dangers and new debts, yet alone acted with ſincerity and ſpirit. Conſcious that the reſtoration of the Pretender would be followed by a ſtrict union between France and England, which might prove deſtructive to their intereſts, they promoted, to the utmoſt of their power, the acceſſion of George the Firſt, and received him, as he paſſed through their country to take poſſeſſion of his throne, with every demonſtration of reſpect and affection. Holland.

Ruſſia was juſt emerging from Aſiatic indolence and barbarity, and riſing into importance under the amazing efforts of Peter the Great, who already entertained thoſe jealouſies againſt George the Firſt, which afterwards nearly broke out into open hoſtilities. But at preſent he was engaged in a war with Sweden and Turkey; and was not in a ſituation either to obſtruct or aſſiſt the acceſſion. Ruſſia.

Sweden, involved in a deſtructive war with Ruſſia, Denmark, and Poland, in which ſhe had loſt her faireſt provinces, and ſeen her veteran ſoldiers either exterminated or taken priſoners, was no longer in that proud ſituation which enabled her to give law to the north. Irritated againſt George the Firſt for the claims which he had begun to make on Bremen and Verden, Charles the Twelfth Sweden.

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Period II. 1714 to 1780.

would have oppoſed his acceſſion, if his circumſtances and ſituation had permitted. But he was at this critical moment reſident in Turkey, uſeleſsly diſplaying thoſe inſtances of romantic bravery and inflexible obſtinacy, which characteriſed rather the leader of a ſavage horde of Tartars, than a ſovereign of a great and civilized people.

Denmark.

Denmark, under the wiſe adminiſtration of Frederic the Fourth, was juſt beginning to recover from the deep wounds inflicted by a long war with Sweden, which ſtill continued; her commerce languiſhing, and the reſources of the ſtate almoſt exhauſted. The king might conſider the acceſſion of his ally, who had long aſpired to ſhare the ſpoils of Sweden, a fortunate occurrence. But Denmark was more likely to require aſſiſtance from George, than George to receive any effectual ſuccour from Denmark. Frederic was at the beſt but a paſſive friend, and only in a ſituation to defend his own territories and conqueſts.

Poland.

Poland, under the feeble domination of an elective monarch, was declining faſt in the political ſcale of Europe. Auguſtus the Second was almoſt a cypher, totally governed by Peter the Great, to whom he owed his re-eſtabliſhment, and in no reſpect ſufficiently conſiderable to affect the ſucceſſion in England.

Italy.

The ſmall ſovereignties, and petty republics of Italy, were of little conſideration.

The Pope.

The Pope, no longer a great temporal prince, took no active ſhare in the general affairs of Europe. Clement the Eleventh, however inclined to

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favour the Pretender, poſſeſſed neither influence or ſtrength ſufficient to obſtruct the ſucceſſion of the Proteſtant line; he could only offer an aſylum to a prince, whoſe father had ſacrificed his crown to his religion; and who, after being driven from place to place as an outcaſt from ſociety, thought himſelf fortunate in being permitted to hide his proſcribed head within the capital of the eccleſiaſtical dominions. Chapter 9. 1714.

Savoy and Piedmont, from their critical ſituation between France and the Milaneſe, and from the tranſcendent talents and military ſkill of ſeveral ſovereigns, particularly Emanuel Philibert, and Charles Emanuel the Firſt, had riſen from a petty principality into conſequence. Victor Amadeus, the reigning prince, no leſs ambitious and enterpriſing than his great predeceſſors, had followed their policy, in ſelling himſelf to thoſe who bid higheſt for his aſſiſtance and alliance, and in making gradually ſmall acquiſitions, which increaſed his ſtrength, without giving umbrage to his neighbours, acting in conformity to a proverb, which he is ſaid to have applied to the Milaneſe: "I muſt "acquire the Milaneſe province by province, as I "eat the leaves of an artichoke." Savoy and Piedmont.

Of all the European ſovereigns who had acceded to the grand alliance, Victor Amadeus alone had reaſon to be contented with the meaſures of the Britiſh cabinet. Anne had zealouſly exerted herſelf in his favour, and obtained for him, at the peace of Utrecht, the kingdom of Sicily; that part of the duchies of Montferrat and Milan, by the ceſſion

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Period II. 1714. to 1720.

ceſſion of which Leopold had detached him from France, and the guaranty of the ſucceſſion to the crown of Spain, on the failure of the male line of Philip the Fifth. Yet theſe important advantages had not ſatisfied the aſpiring views of Victor Amadeus. His conſort, Anna Maria, granddaughter of Charles the Firſt of England, and the next in ſucceſſion after the children of James the Second, had proteſted againſt the act of ſettlement, as contrary to her right by hereditary deſcent; and he conſidered the elector of Hanover as uſurping a crown which belonged to his ſon. He, therefore, looked with an evil eye on the peaceful acceſſion of George the Firſt, and with that verſatility of politics that marked his character, was already meditating a return to his old alliance with France, which he afterwards effected.

Such was the general ſituation of Europe at the death of queen Anne; George had more enemies than friends, and his ſole dependance was placed on the ſpirit and vigour of his partiſans in England; but the ſtate of this country was not ſuch as to augur ſucceſs.

State of parties.

The reigns of his two immediate predeceſſors had been ſtormy, diſtracted with factions, and opened a gloomy proſpect of a new reign, under a foreign ſovereign. The contending political parties, exaſperated by long oppoſition, and all the injuries attending alternate elevation and depreſſion, expreſſed their rancour in mutual accuſation and virulent reproach.

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The Tories, who, though extremely powerful, both in reſpect of numbers and property, were cenſurable for their arrogance, in pronouncing themſelves, excluſively, the landholders and proprietors of the kingdom, reviled their opponents as a faction which leaned for ſupport on the enemies of the church and monarchy, and on the bank, and monied intereſt, which was as they ſaid, raiſed by uſury, and founded on corruption.

The Whigs retaliated by charging the Tories, who formed the bulk of the nation, and included moſt of the country gentlemen and parochial clergy, with an attachment to the French, and hatred of the Dutch; with all the crimes with which they loaded the framers of the peace of Utrecht, and with favouring the intereſts of Louis the Fourteenth, becauſe he ſupported their idol the Pretender. It is a great injuſtice, however, to confound, as they did, the characters of the Tories and Jacobites; for although many of the Tories had, from motives of pique or diſappointed ambition, as well as from affection, correſponded with the court of St. Germains, yet it did not follow that they all uniformly entertained the ſcheme of reſtoring the dethroned family. The inculpation however was not diveſted of all ſhew of truth; the general principles of the Tories tended ſtrongly to enforce paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance, and as they diſapproved the doctrines which occaſioned the revolution, cenſured by implication the Proteſtant ſucceſſion. The Jacobites too, diſappointed in their towering hopes, favoured

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Period II. 1714, to 1720.

favoured this popular miſapprehenſion, by endeavouring to connect the cauſe and opinions of the Tories with their own. The ſtrong feature of diſtinction between the Whigs and Tories was, that the Tories were willing to have aſſented to the reſumption of the crown by the Pretender, if he would have embraced the Proteſtant perſuaſion; while the Whigs, armed with juſt diffidence and diſtruſt, and conſidering the political principles in which he had been educated, no leſs hoſtile to their liberties, than his faith was to their religious perſuaſion, would admit of no compromiſe, nor on any terms agree to his reſtoration.

The Tories were reinforced by the Jacobites, who poſſeſſed great credit abroad, and influence at home; who had acquired an unlimited aſcendancy in the Clans of Scotland, full of reſentment at the act of union, and amongſt the Papiſts of Ireland, who formed the bulk of that kingdom, and were attached to their cauſe by every tie of religious conſideration. The Whigs, to balance the influence of the Jacobites and Catholics, had the aſſiſtance of the whole body of Diſſenters, who, irritated at the ſeverity of the ſchiſm bill, paſſed under the influence of the Tories, hoped, from a Proteſtant monarch, and a Whig adminiſtration, a repeal of that law.

The Whigs now raiſed themſelves from the deſpondency into which they had been thrown by the meaſures of the four laſt years of the queen, and hailed the new reign as the commencement of their triumph. The Tories, divided and irreſolute,

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ſolute, concealed their chagrin in a ſhew of ſubmiſſion, while they meditated new manœuvres for the attainment of power; and the Jacobites, precipitated from the exultation of hope too fondly indulged, ſubmitted for the preſent, but reſolved to embrace the firſt opportunity of breaking into open rebellion.

Character of George the Firſt.

George the Firſt, who, by the death of his mother, the electreſs Sophia *, ſucceeded to the throne of Great Britain, in virtue of the act of Settlement, was ill calculated by nature, diſpoſition, and habit, to reconcile theſe jarring parties, and remove the unfavourable impreſſions, which it was natural for all people to entertain of a foreigner, deſtined to rule over them. He was already fifty-four years of age, and had been long habituated to a court of a different deſcription from that of England, to manners and cuſtoms wholly repugnant to thoſe of his new ſubjects. He was below the middle ſtature, and his perſon, though well proportioned, did not impreſs dignity or reſpect. His countenance was benign, but without much expreſſion; and his addreſs aukward. He was eaſy and familiar only in his hours of relaxation, and to thoſe alone who formed his uſual ſociety; not fond of attracting notice, phlegmatic and grave in his public deportment, hating the ſplendour of majeſty, ſhunning crouds, and fatigued even with the firſt acclamations of the multitude. This

* Sophia, grand daughter of James the Firſt, and widow of Erneſt Auguſtus, elector of Hanover, died the 8th of June, 1714, only two months before queen Anne, in the 84th year of her age.

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Period II. 1714 to 1720.

natural reſerve was heightened by his ignorance of the language, of the firſt principles of the Engliſh conſtitution, and of the ſpirit and temper of the people. Without taſte for the fine arts, except muſic, or the ſmalleſt inclination for polite literature, men of talents had no reaſon to expect from his influence, that patronage which had attended them in the preceding reign.

It was currently reported that meaſures were preparing to evade the laws which excluded foreigners from honours and employments. The example of William was not forgotten, who by his largeſſes to Bentinck, Zuleſtein, and Keppel, had given ſo much umbrage, and George had ſeveral miſtreſſes, of whom two the moſt favoured were expected to accompany him to England, with a numerous train of Hanoverian followers, eager to ſhare the ſpoils of the *promiſed land*; to ſet up a court within a court, and an intereſt oppoſite to the true intereſt of England. It was alſo maliciouſly circulated, that he was * indifferent to his own ſucceſſion, and ſcarcely willing to ſtretch out a hand to graſp the crown within his reach; a report which materially leſſened his influence in foreign courts, and tended to produce reciprocal indifference in the Engliſh. But he had excellent qualities for a ſovereign, plainneſs of manners, ſimplicity of character, and benignity of temper; great application to buſineſs, extreme exactneſs in diſtributing his time, the

* Macpherſon, vol. 2. p. 638.

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ſtricteſt œconomy in regulating his revenue; and, notwithſtanding his military ſkill and tried valour, a love of peace; virtues, however, which required time before they were appreciated, and not of that ſpecious caſt to captivate the multitude, or to raiſe the tide of popularity.

From this repreſentation, it appears that few circumſtances concurred to favour his quiet acceſſion; yet no ſon ever ſucceeded his father on the throne, after an uninterrupted ſucceſſion of a long line of anceſtors, with greater tranquillity than GEORGE the Firſt. This ſucceſs was principally owing to the abilities, prudence, activity, and foreſight of the great Whigs, and to the precautions which they had always taken, and now took, to promote the ſucceſſion in the Proteſtant line, with whom the Hanoverian agents in London concerted their mode of conduct, and to whom the elector from the firſt news he received of the queen's death, wholly reſigned himſelf and his cauſe.

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Period II.
1714 to 1720.

CHAPTER THE TENTH:

1714.

Proceedings in Parliament on the Death of Queen Anne.—Acceſſion of George the Firſt.—Tranſactions at Hanover.—Artful Policy of the King, in his Conduct to the Two Parties.—His Arrival in England.—Formation of a Whig Miniſtry.—Walpole Paymaſter of the Forces.—Inveteracy of Parties.

Proceedings on the death of the queen.

THE queen had no ſooner expired, than the great officers of the realm, in whom the regency bill had veſted the executive power, together with certain peers, appointed by the elector of Hanover, in three inſtruments written by himſelf, took upon themſelves, as lords juſtices, the adminiſtration of affairs till the arrival of the new ſovereign, and ſummoned the privy council.

Proclamation of king George.

George was proclaimed king, with the uſual ſolemnities, in the cities of London and Weſtminſter; no diſorder was committed, or oppoſition made, and the earl of Dorſet was diſpatched to carry to Hanover the news of his inauguration, and to attend him to England. The proclamation took place with equal tranquillity at Edinburgh and Dublin.

Auguſt 1. Meeting of Parliament.

On the Sunday, when the queen died, the parliament met purſuant to the act which regulated the ſucceſſion. Sir Thomas Hanmer, the ſpeaker, being abſent, Bromley, ſecretary of ſtate, moved that the houſe ſhould adjourn to Wedneſday; but Sir Richard Onſlow oppoſing this motion, from the

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the conſideration that time was too precious to be loſt at ſo critical a juncture, propoſed, that the houſe ſhould adjourn only to the following morning, which was carried. The three ſucceeding days being occupied in taking the oaths, on the 5th the lords juſtices came to the houſe of peers, and the chancellor, in their name, made a ſpeech, declaring that they had, in virtue of the act of ſettlement, and in conjunction with the privy council, proclaimed the elector of Hanover king; and as ſeveral branches of the public revenue had expired by the demiſe of the queen, recommended the houſe of commons to make ſuch proviſions as were requiſite to ſupport the dignity and honour of the crown *.

Both houſes unanimouſly agreed to addreſſes of condolence for the death of queen Anne, and of congratulation on the acceſſion of the king; and when, in the houſe of commons, the ſecretary of ſtate, in moving the addreſs, expatiated on the great loſs which the nation had ſuſtained, Walpole ſeconded the motion, but propoſed "to add ſomething more ſubſtantial than words, by giving aſſurances of making good all parliamentary funds." Onſlow, member for Surry, alſo obſerved, that the force of the addreſs ought to conſiſt, not in condolence only, but congratulations, and in aſſuring the king of their firm reſolution to ſupport his undoubted title to the crown, and to maintain

Walpole ſupports the motion for an addreſs.

* Journals.

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the public credit. The Whigs acted with extraordinary prudence at this crisis: For when the renewal of the civil list was brought into the lower house, the Tories, under pretence of extraordinary zeal for the new government, proposed one million, which was £. 300,000 more than the revenue of the late queen. But the king's friends, apprehensive that the Tories acted insidiously, either with a view to conciliate favour, or for the purpose of reproaching him afterwards, as oppressing the nation by a higher revenue than his predecessor had enjoyed, did not second the motion, and it was dropped. A bill passed, fixing the same sum which had been granted in the last reign, with two additional clauses, moved by Horace Walpole, for the payment of arrears due to the troops of Hanover, and for a reward of £. 100,000, from the treasury, to any person apprehending the Pretender, if he should attempt to land in any part of the British dominions.

The king's answer to the addresses.

The king having returned an answer to the addresses, the lords justices came again to the house of peers on the 23d of August, and the chancellor intimated his majesty's great satisfaction at the loyalty and affection which his subjects had displayed: other loyal addresses were made in reply; the royal assent was given by the lords justices to the money bills, and parliament prorogued to the 23d of September. Thus ended a session, which was conducted with a degree of tranquillity and unanimity long unknown to their proceedings, and seemed

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ſeemed to give a happy omen of a quiet and proſperous reign *.

Tranſactions at Hanover.

During theſe tranſactions, the eyes of Europe and the expectations of England were naturally directed to Hanover. On the 26th of July, the earl of Clarendon, a zealous Tory, who was appointed envoy extraordinary from the queen, had arrived in that capital; but it was not till the 4th of Auguſt that he received his firſt audience at the palace of Herenhauſen. At this interview the elector affected to repoſe the higheſt confidence in the promiſes of the queen, expreſſed a ſenſe of the obligations which his family owed to her, and profeſſed himſelf unacquainted with the demand made by the electreſs, of the writ for calling his ſon to the houſe of peers †. Craggs, who had been ſent with an account of the queen's dangerous illneſs, arrived there on the 27th, and inſtantly went to Herenhauſen with the letter from the privy council; and on the ſame night three ‡ other expreſſes came over, two to the king, and one to Clarendon, with the news of the queen's death. On the receipt of this intelligence, the king ſummoned his council; and baron Polnitz, who was at Hanover, adds, "many people were pleaſed to ſay, that the elector heſitated whether he ſhould accept of the auguſt dignity; but for my part, I fancy that the voyage to England was

* Journals.—Political State of Great Britain.—Chandler.—Tindal.

† Correſpondence, Period 2d. Clarendon's Letter to Bromley—Auguſt 7th.

‡ Tindal, v. 28, p. 388.

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more the ſubject of the council's deliberation, than the queſtion whether the crown ſhould be accepted *."

When the council was over, he was complimented on his acceſſion; and gave orders to make preparations for his departure, which he judiciouſly delayed, that he might obtain from England ſuch information as would aſſiſt him in the difficult taſk of forming a new adminiſtration, which he managed with great prudence and dexterity.

Prudent conduct of the king.

George had already conducted himſelf with ſo much addreſs, that Clarendon does not appear to have entertained the ſmalleſt ſuſpicion of any diſinclination to the Tories; and Bernſdorf and Goertz, his two principal miniſters at Hanover, correſponded reſpectively with each party. Bernſdorf countenanced the Whigs, Goertz the Tories, ſo that each party entertained hopes of being called into office. The expectations of the Tories were ſtill farther raiſed by the conduct of Halifax, who, diſappointed of the office of lord high treaſurer, by the influence of Townſhend, propoſed the formation of a motley miniſtry, recommending, among other Tories, Bromley to be chancellor of the exchequer, and Sir Thomas Hanmer one of the tellers. The hope that the king would accede to this, or ſome other arrangement, and their "dependance on real credit and ſubſtantial power under the new government †," kept the Tories in ſuſpenſe, and prevented their oppoſing his eſtabliſh-

* Memoirs of Polnitz: Article Hanover.

† Bolingbroke's Letter to Sir William Wyndham.

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ment. Yet, though the king did not ſeem averſe to their cauſe, he appears at that very time to have formed, with the advice of Bothmar, his agent in London, an adminiſtration entirely of Whigs, but of this he gave no public indication till after his arrival at the Hague, which occaſioned a report, that he was not before decided from which party he ſhould ſelect a cabinet. At the Hague, the aſcendancy of the Whigs was manifeſt, by the public appointment of Townſhend to be ſecretary of ſtate, with the power of nominating his colleague. In fact, Horace Walpole *, the brother-in-law and confidential ſecretary of lord Townſhend, by whoſe recommendation Stanhope was afterwards aſſociated with Townſhend as ſecretary, poſitively denies that it was ever the king's intention to form a Tory adminiſtration. Chapter 10. 1714.

The moſt agreeable accounts being tranſmitted by Bothmar, that things wore a favourable appearance, the king continued a fortnight at the Hague, receiving the affectionate congratulations of the States, and the compliments of the foreign miniſters, and ſettling with the Whigs the mode of his future conduct, and the members of the new adminiſtration to be appointed on his arrival in England.

At ſix in the afternoon, on the 18th of September, amidſt a large concourſe of nobility and gentry, GEORGE THE FIRST landed at Greenwich. He particularly diſtinguiſhed the Whig lords, Arrival of the king.

* Letter to Etough, September 21, 1752. Correſpondence, Period II.

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did not pay the ſmalleſt attention to Ormond and Harcourt, and only ſlightingly noticed Oxford, who was on the following morning admitted to kiſs his hand.

New miniſtry.

The appointment of the new adminiſtration had been already announced by previous arrangements. The lords of the regency declared Addiſon their ſecretary, and ordered all diſpatches to be forwarded to him; to the great mortification of Bolingbroke, who was obliged to ſtand at the door of the council with his papers, without obtaining admittance. On the 28th of Auguſt, an expreſs had arrived from Hanover, bearing orders from the king for removing Bolingbroke from his office of ſecretary of ſtate; the diſmiſſion was attended with evident marks of diſpleaſure from the lords of the regency, Shrewſbury, Somerſet, and Cowper taking the ſeals, and locking the doors of his office; and on the 17th of September, before the king's arrival, Townſhend was ſworn principal ſecretary of ſtate in his place. Stanhope was appointed the other ſecretary; Cowper, lord chancellor; Marlborough, commander in chief; Wharton, privy ſeal; Sunderland, lord lieutenant of Ireland; Halifax, firſt lord commiſſioner of the treaſury; Devonſhire, lord ſteward of the houſehold; Orford, firſt lord commiſſioner of the admiralty; Somerſet, maſter of the horſe; Walpole, paymaſter of the forces, and many of his friends provided for in ſubordinate offices. The principal employments were filled with Whigs; Shrewſbury, who had been the oſtenſible means

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of defeating the ſchemes of Bolingbroke, having reſigned the high truſts of lord treaſurer, and lord lieutenant of Ireland, was conſtituted groom of the ſtole; and the only Tory who was admitted into a high department, and treated with any degree of confidence, was Nottingham, who was declared preſident of the council. A new privy council was appointed, and a cabinet formed, conſiſting principally of Marlborough, Nottingham, Sunderland, Halifax, Townſhend, Cowper, Stanhope, and Somers, who, on account of his increaſing infirmities, was incapable of filling any active department. Chapter 10. 1714.

The king, or rather Townſhend and Walpole, to whom the formation of the new miniſtry was principally attributed, have been ſeverely cenſured for excluding the Tories, and confining all places of truſt and confidence excluſively to the Whigs, thus making the monarch the leader of a party, inſtead of ſovereign of his people at large.

It may not be improper to remark, that in treating of paſt events, writers are too apt to form a judgment of things according to principles of theoretical juſtice or fancied perfection, without conſidering the temper of the times, or making ſufficient allowance for the powerful operation of opinions and prejudices. When we conſult contemporary accounts, we find that ſo great was the inveteracy which ſubſiſted between the Whigs and Tories, that neither would have been content with leſs than the whole power; and ſuch was the temper of the nation at the time Inveteracy of parties.

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time of the king's acceſſion, and the animoſity derived from the claſh of civil and religious opinions, that it would have been impracticable to form a ſtable coalition between the two parties. In fact, the ſcheme of uniting the Whigs and Tories was incompatible; for even ſo late as 1742, when Pulteney attempted to form his new adminiſtration on an extended and liberal principle, he would not venture to introduce many Tories; he declared that the baſis of the miniſtry muſt be a Whig trunk engrafted with Tory branches; and that gradually the grafts would become more and more numerous and thriving. Nor was it till 1744, when the junction ludicrouſly called the Broad Bottom was arranged, that the great bodies of Whigs and Tories could be brought to coaleſce.

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH:

1714—1716.

Riſe and Character of Lord Townſhend.—Intimacy with Walpole.—Meeting of the new Parliament.—Walpole takes the Lead.—Draws up the Report of the ſecret Commitee.—Manages the Impeachment of Bolingbroke—Ormond and Oxford.—Motives for that Conduct.—Rebellion.—His Activity and Services.—Appointed Firſt Lord of the Treaſury, and Chancellor of the Exchequer.—Proceedings in Parliament.—Trial and Execution of the Rebels.

Character of lord Townſhend.

CHARLES Viſcount Townſhend, who now took the lead in the adminiſtration, was eldeſt ſon of Sir Horatio Townſhend, who was ſo highly inſtrumental in forwarding the reſtoration of Charles the

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the Second, that in 1661 he was created a peer, and in 1682 raiſed to the dignity of Viſcount. Charles took his ſeat in the houſe of peers in 1697, attached himſelf to Somers, and acted ſo cordially with the Whigs, that when William formed a new adminiſtration, principally compoſed of that party, a rumour was circulated, that he was appointed privy ſeal *. In 1706, he was nominated one of the commiſſioners for ſettling the union with Scotland; in 1707, captain of the yeomen of the queen's guard, and in 1709, accompanied the duke of Marlborough to Gertruydenberg, as joint plenipotentiary, to open a negotiation for peace with France; he was deputed in the ſame year ambaſſador extraordinary to the ſtates general, and concluded with them the barrier treaty. Soon after the change of the Whig adminiſtration he reſigned his embaſſy, was removed from his poſt of captain of the yeomen, and cenſured by the Tory houſe of commons for having ſigned that treaty. During the early part of the reign of queen Anne, on account of his youth, he had acted only a ſubordinate part; but towards the cloſe of that reign, his ſervices and deciſive conduct raiſed his conſequence, and he gained great acceſſion of character, with his party, on being proſecuted at the ſame time with the duke of Marlborough.

With parts more ſolid than ſpecious, Townſhend acquired unremitted aſſiduity, and from long

* Letter from Henry Bland to Robert Walpole, February 3, 1701-2. Orford Papers.

experience,

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Period II. 1714 to 1720.

experience, the talent that rendered him an able man of buſineſs, which was the principal object of his ambition. Though plain in his language, and often perplexed in argument, yet he ſpoke ſenſibly, and with a thorough knowledge of his ſubject *. He was firm, generous, diſintereſted, of unblemiſhed integrity, and unſullied honour: but he was warm, impetuous, and impatient of contradiction. Initiated in diplomatic tranſactions during the congreſs at Gertruydenberg and the Hague, he cheriſhed too great an attachment to negotiation, and was apt to propoſe bold and deciſive meaſures, which the temperate and pacific diſpoſition of Walpole was continually employed in counteracting.

During the two months which immediately preceded the queen's death, and the interval which enſued between that event and the arrival of the king, Townſhend ſeems to have ſecured and governed † Bothmar, and the other Hanoverian agents in England; to have ſupplanted Sunderland and Halifax, and to have obtained the entire confidence of the king, of which he had previouſly acquired a very diſtinguiſhed ſhare, by his great reputation for integrity and talents, by the recommendation of penſionary Heinſius, Slingelandt, and other leading men of the Dutch republic, and by his uniform adherence to the cauſe of the Proteſtant ſucceſſion.

* Lord Cheſterfield's Letters to his Son, vol. 2. p. 258.
† Macpherſon's Papers, vol. 2.

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Chapter 11. 1714 to 1716.

Walpole's intimacy with Townſhend.

An early and intimate connection had been formed between Townſhend and Walpole; they were diſtantly related, neighbours in the ſame county, and educated at the ſame ſchool; they joined the ſame party, acted under the ſame leaders, underwent the ſame perſecutions, and co-operated in the ſame oppoſition. The marriage which Townſhend had contracted with Dorothy Walpole, in 1713, drew cloſer the bonds of amity, and added an union of blood to the connection of party. Walpole had performed too many eſſential ſervices to the Hanover family, and was too able a ſpeaker in the houſe of commons, not to occupy a diſtinguiſhed ſituation at the acceſſion of George the Firſt, and his connection with Townſhend facilitated his promotion. Soon after the landing of the king, he was appointed, as I have already mentioned, paymaſter general of the forces, to which was added the paymaſterſhip of Chelſea Hoſpital; very lucrative employments, in which he conſiderably improved his fortune.

1715. New parliament.

A diſſolution taking place on the 5th of January, the new parliament met on the 17th of March, and a great majority were Whigs. The temper of the governing party, in regard to the proſecution of the Tories, and the reſolution of calling the late miniſtry to account, evidently appeared from the proclamation for diſſolving the parliament. The addreſs of the lords contained expreſſions highly injurious to the queen's memory, and warmly condemned the peace, and meaſures

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Period II. 1714 to 1720.

Moves an address, reflecting on the measures of the late queen.

sures of the late administration. But the address of the commons was still stronger. "The speaker having reported to the house the king's speech, Walpole expatiated upon the great happiness of the nation, by his majesty's seasonable accession to the crown; recapitulated the mismanagements of the four last years, and concluded with a motion for an address of thanks to the king, conformable to the several heads of the speech*." The motion being carried with only one dissenting voice, it was drawn up by Walpole, and contained these strong expressions†: "It is with just resentment we observe, that the Pretender still resides in Lorrain, and that he has the presumption, by declarations from thence, to stir up you majesty's subjects to rebellion; but that which raises the utmost indignation of your commons is, that it appears therein, that his hopes were built upon the measures that had been taken for some time past in Great Britain. It shall be our business to trace out those measures whereon he placed his hopes, *and to bring the authors of them to condign punishment*." Part of this address being warmly opposed by the Tory members, on the grounds of its being a reflection on the late queen; Walpole observed, ‡ "that nothing was farther from their intentions, than to asperse the late queen; that they rather designed to vindicate her memory, by exposing and punishing those evil counsellors, who had thrown on that good, pious, and well-meaning princess, all the blame and odium of their counsels." He added,

* Journals. † Chandler. ‡ Chandler.

"that

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" that they muſt diſtinguiſh between cenſuring miniſters, and condemning the peace in general, and condemning particular perſons. That they might, in equity and juſtice, do the firſt, becauſe the whole nation was already ſenſible that their honour and true intereſt had been ſacrificed by the late peace; that in due time they would call them to account, who made and adviſed ſuch a peace; but God forbid they ſhould ever condemn any perſon unheard."

Conduct towards Sir William Wyndham.

Walpole ſhewed, in a ſubſequent debate, his judgment no leſs than his zeal. For when Sir William Wyndham endeavoured to prove that the king's proclamation was of dangerous conſequences to the very being of parliament, and being called upon to explain himſelf, but refuſing, many members exclaimed, " To the Tower! To the Tower!" Walpole, foreſeeing that he would acquire popularity, ſhould that meaſure be adopted, obſerved, " I am not for gratifying the deſire which the member, who occaſions this great debate, ſhews of being ſent to the Tower; it would make him too conſiderable: but as he is a young man of good parts, who ſets up for a warm champion of the late miniſtry, and one who was in all their ſecrets, I would wiſh him to be in the houſe when we inquire into the conduct of his friends, both that he may have an opportunity to defend them, and be a witneſs of the fairneſs with which we ſhall proceed againſt thoſe gentlemen; and that it may not be ſaid, that we take any advantage againſt them*."

* Political State of Great Britain.—Chandler.

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Period II. 1714 to 1720.

It was principally owing to his influence, that although Sir William Wyndham continued to refuſe making any explanation, he was only ordered to be reprimanded by the ſpeaker.

Proſecution of the ex-miniſters.

The threats of the addreſs, which implied a reſolution of proſecuting the late miniſters, were ſoon carried into execution. The papers of Bolingbroke, Strafford, and Prior, having been ſeized and inſpected, ſecretary Stanhope preſented to the houſe of commons, thoſe which related to the negotiations for peace and commerce; and a committee of ſecrecy, conſiſting of twenty-one members, being appointed to examine if there was any juſt cauſe of impeachment, Walpole was nominated chairman, and took the lead in the whole buſineſs. He drew up the maſterly report, which is remarkable for perſpicuity of ſtyle, method of arrangement, and for digeſting, in ſo ſhort a compaſs, ſuch a maſs of materials. William Shippen having triumphantly inſinuated, that notwithſtanding the clamour which had been raiſed againſt the late miniſtry, the ſecret committee would not be able to bring any proofs of their guilt, Walpole indignantly, though intemperately obſerved, that he wanted words to expreſs the villany of the late Frenchified miniſtry; and it was judged proper to haſten the report. Accordingly, on the 9th of June, only two months after the houſe had ordered the committee to reduce the papers into order, Walpole read the report, which he continued without interruption five hours.

His report as chairman of the committee of ſecrecy.

It

It was divided into two parts. The first stated the clandestine negotiations with Mesnager, the French plenipotentiary, which produced two sets of preliminary articles; the one private and special, for Great Britain only, the other general, for all her allies: the deceitful offers of the French plenipotentiaries at Utrecht, with the connivances of the ministry; the negotiation in regard to the renunciation of the Spanish monarchy; the suspension of arms; the seizure of Ghent and Bruges by the duke of Ormond, and his acting in concert with the French general; the journey of Bolingbroke to France, for arranging a separate *peace*; the negotiations of Shrewsbury and Prior, and the precipitate conclusion of the treaty of Utrecht, with a view of criminating the ministers for having deserted their allies, and betrayed the interests and honour of their country. The second part stated, their secret transactions with the Pretender; a letter from Oxford to the queen, containing a brief account of public affairs from August 6, 1710, to June 8, 1714; the desertion of the Catalans, and some other papers of less importance *.

Impeachment of Bolingbroke, Oxford, and Strafford.

On the conclusion of the report, Sir Thomas Hanmer moved, that the consideration should be adjourned to the 21st; and being seconded by the friends of the late administration, Walpole observed, " he could not but wonder, that those gentlemen who shewed so much impatience to have

* Reports of the secret committee, in the Journals. Abstract of the secret committee, in Historical Register, from 1714 to 1716, vol. 1. p. 164 to 269.—Tindal, vol. 18. p. 246. to 288.

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the report laid before the houſe, ſhould now preſs for adjourning the conſideration of it. That as for the committee of ſecrecy, as they had not yet gone through all the branches of their inquiry, he could have wiſhed ſome longer time had been allowed to peruſe and digeſt ſeveral important papers. That for this purpoſe, they would have deferred three weeks or a month, the laying their report before the houſe; but that ſome gentlemen having reflected on the pretended ſlowneſs of the committee, ſince the ſaid report was now before them, they muſt e'en go through with it *." The motion of Sir Thomas Hanmer being negatived, Walpole impeached Bolingbroke of high treaſon, and other crimes and miſdemeanors; and the queſtion being carried with only a ſlight oppoſition of two members, Lord Coningſby ſtood up and ſaid, "The worthy chairman of the committee has impeached the hand, but I impeach the head; he has impeached the clerk, I impeach the maſter;" and immediately impeached Robert earl of Oxford and Mortimer, of high treaſon. On the 21ſt of June, Stanhope alſo impeached Strafford of high crimes and miſdemeanors.

Walpole draws up the articles of impeachment.

The current of opinion ran ſo violently againſt the late adminiſtration, that theſe proſecutions were carried with little oppoſition. The drawing up of the articles of impeachment was entruſted to the committee of ſecrecy, and conſequently to Walpole, who, in conjunction with Stanhope, now

* Chandler.—Hiſtorical Regiſter, v. 1. p. 270.

principally

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principally directed the houſe of commons. The articles of impeachment were ſeverally carried up to the houſe of lords. Ormond and Bolingbroke having abſconded, were attainted. Oxford acted a more manly part, ſupported his proſecution, defended his conduct with dignity and moderation, and made a calm and firm anſwer to the accuſation of the commons. His defence being tranſmitted by the lords, was read in the lower houſe, where Walpole animadverted on it with great acrimony, and drew up a replication.

Conduct of the parties accuſed.

Oxford's defence.

Walpole's replication.

The proſecution of the leaders of the late adminiſtration has been conſtantly, and in ſome degree juſtly, held up by the Tory hiſtorians as a ſtriking proof of the ſpirit of party-reſentment and party-vengeance, and no leſs conſtantly defended by the Whigs. The argument, however, which Oxford advanced on his trial, which his partiſans adopted in both houſes, and which has been ſince urged in his juſtification, that he had acted only in obedience to the commands of the queen, was more ſpecious than ſolid. If admitted in the utmoſt latitude, it would eſtabliſh the poſition, that thoſe who gave pernicious counſels to the ſovereign, might ſhelter themſelves under the ſanction of thoſe very commands which they had dictated. If the voice of the ſovereign is ſufficient to authorize the ſervants of the crown in execution of orders, however illegal, it follows then that the crown would be arbitrary; and as the king can do no wrong, no miniſter would be reſponſible for the abuſe of the executive power. But there is ano-

Obſervations on theſe proſecutions.

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ther argument againſt the impeachment of the late miniſters, far more convincing. It was forcibly urged by Sir William Wyndham, that the peace had been approved by two ſucceſſive parliaments, and declared ſafe, advantageous, and honourable. "Should it be even allowed," he ſaid, "that the meaſures of the Tory adminiſtration were contrary to the honour and intereſts of the nation, yet with what pretence of juſtice could miniſters be puniſhed? our conſtitution knows no limits to the power of the king, lords, and commons aſſembled in parliament; and though a ſubſequent parliament may annul any laws which a former parliament had decreed, yet it cannot, and ought not to call any miniſters to juſtice for meaſures which had been ſanctioned by the three branches of the legiſlature."

It is far from my intention or wiſh, to palliate the injuſtice, or to ſanction the malignant ſpirit of party, yet I may be allowed to examine the principal motives which might have led men of ſuch approved humanity as Townſhend, Devonſhire, Stanhope, and Walpole, to adopt theſe ſevere meaſures. The Whigs were firmly convinced, that the late queen deſired to reſtore the Pretender, after her death; that Harley and Bolingbroke had, through the ſecret intereſt of the Pretender and his agents, obtained the diſmiſſion of the Whig adminiſtration; that, with a view to remain in power, they found a peace with France to be eſſentially neceſſary; and that to obtain that peace, they had not ſcrupled to uſe the aſſiſtance of the court of St.

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St. Germains, and the co-operation of the Jacobites in England; that they had opened ſecret negotiations with France, in contradiction to the leading principles of the grand alliance, and that, had not the death of the queen prevented their ſchemes, they would have ſet aſide the act of ſettlement, and introduced a popiſh ſovereign on the throne. Chapter 11. 1714 to 1716.

The imprudent conduct of the Pretender increaſed the animoſity of the Whigs, and haſtened the proſecution of his ſuppoſed adherents. His manifeſto, dated Auguſt 29, 1714, ſent to ſome of the principal miniſters, contained theſe remarkable expreſſions: "Upon the death of the princeſs our ſiſter, *of whoſe good intentions towards us, we could not for ſome time paſt well doubt; and this was the reaſon we then ſat ſtill*, expecting the good effects thereof, which were unfortunately prevented by her deplorable death *." Although from the nature of the tranſaction, and the ſuppreſſion of many papers, they could not procure ſuch legal proof as would be admitted in a court of juſtice on the condemnation of a criminal, yet the collateral evidence was fully convincing. It muſt, however, be confeſſed, that the part of the report which infers the intention of the late miniſtry to reſtore the Pretender, is extremely weak, founded only on vague conjecture and circumſtantial evidence; they could not, therefore, venture to lay any great ſtreſs on ſuch aſſertions, as proofs of high treaſon, Imprudence of the Pretender.

* Tindal, vol. 18. p. 251.

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but grounded their profecution on the public events which related to the peace. Though animated by the powerful impreſſions of a high ſenſe of national diſgrace, the recollection of an eſcape from recent danger, and all the ſpirit and reſentment of party, they confined their attacks to a few victims; they impeached only Oxford, Bolingbroke, and Ormond of high treaſon, and Strafford of high crimes and miſdemeanors.

Bolingbroke attainted.

As to Bolingbroke, when Walpole brought forward his impeachment, only one member ſpoke in his defence, and that member was a notorious Jacobite, and when his flight was reported to the houſe, the bill of attainder againſt him paſſed without a ſingle diſſenting voice.

Ormond defended by his friends.

But the ſituation and character of Ormond were far different. When Stanhope moved for the impeachment of Ormond, Hutcheſon, member for Haſtings, made a long ſpeech in his behalf, and urged many palliating circumſtances; and Sir Joſeph Jekyll, whoſe principles and conduct had always proved him a ſincere friend to the Proteſtant ſucceſſion, ſpoke warmly on the ſame ſide. The debate continued above nine hours, and Ormond had ſo many friends, that his impeachment was carried only by a majority of forty-ſeven. The proceedings againſt Ormond would not, in all probability, have been conducted with much aſperity, had he preſerved the moderation, which, under his circumſtances, would have been becoming; but, on the contrary, while his conduct was under inquiry before the ſecret committee, he lived in an

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unſuitable ſtyle of magnificence, affected to court popularity, and ſaw with complacency his name made the ſignal of tumult, and diſloyal exclamation. Even after his impeachment, Devonſhire had arranged for him a private interview with the king; but far from availing himſelf of this kindneſs, and contrary to the promiſe extorted from him by his Tory friends, he withdrew from the kingdom, and precluded the poſſibility of a return to his native country, by inſtantly entering into the ſervice of the Pretender. Having once embraced that deſperate meaſure, he was too honeſt and zealous to act like Bolingbroke, and obtain a pardon by ſacrificing the intereſts of his new maſter, or by entering into a compromiſe with his proſecutors.

The warmeſt advocates for the Whigs muſt admit, that in the proceedings againſt the earl of Oxford, party reſentment was too predominant. He certainly had, either from inclination, fear, policy, or pique, defeated the attempts of the Pretender's friends, and had been one great cauſe of ſecuring the quiet ſucceſſion of the houſe of Hanover. On the acceſſion of George the Firſt, he had ſhewn ſuch unequivocal proofs of his attachment and triumph *, as diſguſted his former friends, and there is not the leaſt doubt that had the queen lived, Oxford would have joined the Whigs, and exerted himſelf in favour of the houſe

The Whigs cenſured for the proſecution of Oxford.

* "The Dragon was thought to ſhew more joy in proclaiming the king, than was conſiſtent with the obligations he had received from ———. He was hiſſed all the way by the mob, and ſome of them threw halters in his coach." Charles Ford to Swift, Auguſt 5, 1714.

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of Hanover. But it is a juſtice due to Townſhend and Walpole, to obſerve, that they ſtrenuouſly inſiſted, Oxford ſhould not be accuſed of high treaſon, but only tried for high crimes and miſdemeanors *; and that they uniformly oppoſed his bill of attainder, which was no leſs warmly ſupported by Marlborough and his adherents. Oxford acted with great magnanimity during the whole courſe of his proſecution; and evinced a conſciouſneſs that he was innocent of the charge of having promoted the ſucceſſion of the Pretender, by abiding his trial.

Commencement of the Rebellion.

The multiplicity of buſineſs protracted the ſitting of the parliament till the 21ſt of September. Before its prorogation, the tumults and riots which preceded the Rebellion had already begun. The earl of Mar ſet up the ſtandard of the Pretender in Scotland, under the name of James the Third. His party increaſed, and became formidable from the number of diſaffected. In this criſis, the vigilance and activity of the miniſters was aided by the zeal of parliament. The habeas corpus act was ſuſpended. The earl of Jerſey and lord Lanſdowne were committed to the Tower; Sir William Wyndham, † and other ſuſpected perſons of the houſe

* Correſpondence. Period II.

† The following anecdote, relating to the arreſt of Sir William Wyndham, places Lord Townſhend's firmneſs of character in a conſpicuous point of view.—It was communicated to me by his grandſon Lord Sydney. When the intelligence that Sir William Wyndham was concerned in a projected riſing in favour of the Pretender, was laid before the cabinet, the duke of Somerſet, anxious that his ſon-in-law, Sir William Wyndham, ſhould not be taken into cuſtody, offered to be reſponſible for him. The miniſters were inclined to give way, for fear

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houſe of commons, were apprehended *; large ſupplies were voted; a conſiderable body of men marched under the command of the duke of Argyle, and troops were obtained from Holland, by the repreſentations of Horace Walpole, who was deputed to the Hague for that purpoſe. The reader will find, in the hiſtories of the times, an account of the partial defeat of the Rebels under the earl of Mar at Dumblain, by the duke of Argyle, which effectually prevented their junction with thoſe in the ſouth; the total route of their force at Preſton, by general Carpenter; the landing of the Pretender in Scotland; his ſhort diſplay of mock dignity at Perth; his flight from Scotland, and return to France, and the final ſuppreſſion of the rebellion. To enter into the detail of theſe tranſactions, does not fall within the compaſs of the preſent work. It is ſufficient for the author of theſe memoirs to obſerve, that vigour in counſels, exertion in parliament, readineſs to forward every ſupply, to anſwer every occaſion, and to facilitate the meaſures of government, increaſed the reputation of Walpole, and endeared him to his king and country.

Walpole's activity at this time.

In

fear of offending a perſon of the duke's conſequence, who, beſides his ſituation of maſter of the horſe, had great influence with the Whigs. The king was preſent. The proofs againſt Sir William Wyndham were ſo ſtrong, that Lord Townſhend deemed it neceſſary that government ſhould not appear afraid to arreſt ſuch an offender, let his rank or connexions be what they might, and moved accordingly to have him taken into cuſtody. Near ten minutes paſſed in ſilence before any one ventured to agree with him; when at laſt, two or three roſe at the ſame moment to ſecond him, and the arreſt was decreed. As the king retired into his cloſet, he took hold of Lord Townſhend's hand, and ſaid, "You have done me a great ſervice to-day."

* See State Trials, vol. 1, and Hiſt. Regiſter.

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He is appointed first lord of the treasury, and chancellor of the exchequer.

In consideration of his services and useful talents, he was, on the 11th of October 1715, appointed first lord commissioner of the treasury, and chancellor of the exchequer, vacant by the death of the earl of Halifax, and the removal of the earl of Carlisle, who had immediately succeeded Halifax. He was raised to this high station at a very critical juncture; a rebellion in the kingdom; a faction secretly aiding and abetting the Pretender; divisions in the cabinet, and a disaffected body among the Whigs, already preparing the schism which broke out in the ensuing year. In the latter part of his life, he often adverted to the difficulty he now experienced in conciliating the discordant members of administration, and supporting the house of Brunswick on the throne.

Proceedings in parliament.

The king's speech; the zealous addresses of congratulation made by both houses on the suppression of the rebellion, the impeachment and condemnation of the rebel lords, engaged the principal attention of both houses, for a considerable time after the meeting of parliament, on the 14th of December; and the petitions in favour of the earls of Derwentwater, Nithisdale, and Kenmure, were urged with such vehemence, and so warmly supported by several members in the house of commons, as irritated Walpole, and induced him to observe, "I am moved with indignation to see that there should be such unworthy members of this great body, who can, without blushing, open their mouths in favour of rebels and parricides, who, far from making the least

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leaſt advance towards deſerving favour, by an ingenuous diſcovery of the bottom of the preſent horrid conſpiracy, have rather aggravated their guilt, both by their ſullen ſilence and prevaricating anſwers; the earl of Derwentwater," added he, "pretended, and affirmed, that he went unprepared, and was drawn unawares into this rebellion; yet to my knowledge, he had been tampering with ſeveral people, to perſuade them to riſe in favour of the Pretender, ſix months before he appeared in arms *:" and with a view to prevent the houſe being troubled with any further petitions, which it was determined to reject, Walpole himſelf propoſed an adjournment † to the 1ſt March, as it was known that their execution was to take place before that time: the motion met with ſo ſtrong an oppoſition, that it was carried only by a majority of ſeven voices. But Walpole proved his indignation to originate in virtuous and diſintereſted motives, when he ſtated to the houſe, that he had been offered £. 60,000 ‡ to ſave the life of one ſingle perſon (the earl of Derwentwater). He alſo ſpoke, as one of the managers for the commons, in the proſecution of the earl of Wintown, another of the rebel lords; and he ſeems in every inſtance to have urged the neceſſity of adopting ſevere meaſures in the preſent alarming criſis; a mode of conduct ſo oppoſite to the natural bias of his

1716. Feb. 22d.

* Oldmixon, p. 631.

† Second letter to Robert Walpole, Eſquire, 30.

‡ Political State of Great Britain, 1716.—Chandler.—Tindal.—Etough.

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temper, which always leaned to the ſide of humanity, as proved his full conviction, that too much lenity ſhewn to perſons taken in flagrant rebellion, would at this period have proved dangerous to the ſtate.

Much has been ſaid of the ſeverity ſhewn by government to the people who took up arms in favour of the Pretender; and from the accounts of the party writers, it might be ſuppoſed, that thouſands and tens of thouſands had fallen ſacrifices to their miſtaken principles; that no clemency was ſhewn to *any* of the rebels; no diſtinction made between the leaders and their deluded followers. But on a candid inveſtigation of the fact, on the authority of the perſons who have condemned theſe meaſures, the reſult will be, that *three* lords were beheaded on Tower-hill; that the judges having found many guilty of high treaſon in Lancaſhire, *two-and-twenty* were executed at Preſton and Mancheſter; that of a great number found guilty at London, only *four* were hanged *. Such were the lenient proceedings againſt the rebels, which writers, adopting a peeviſh expreſſion of the great Lord Somers, have magnified into the proſcriptions of Marius and Sylla; and faſcinated by the metaphorical eloquence of Bolingbroke, have taken in its full latitude his malignant aſſertion, "That the violence of the Whigs dyed the royal ermines with blood †." In fact, no government can exiſt, if *all* rebels

* Smollet, vol. 2. p. 311.
† Smollet.—Belſham's Memoirs, vol. 1. p. 113.

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taken with arms in their hands are permitted to escape with impunity; and too great lenity under a new king, who was a foreigner, struggling against a competitor claiming the crown by hereditary right, and supported by all the Roman Catholics, and the principal Tories, would have been not only imprudent, but even inhuman; because it would have held up impunity to those who should raise the standard of insurrection in future. Nor did it ever happen, on the conclusion of a rebellion for a disputed succession, that so few sacrifices were made to the public security. Chapter 11. 1714 to 1716.

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH:

1716.

Illness of Walpole.—Recovery.—Septennial Bill.—Impatience of the King to visit Hanover.—Repeal of the restraining Clause in the Act of Settlement.—Misunderstanding between the King and the Prince of Wales, who is appointed Guardian of the Realm.—Departure of the King for Hanover.

THE activity of Walpole's exertions at this important period, and the great corporeal and mental fatigue to which they subjected him, brought on a severe illness, which nearly hurried him to the grave. His recovery was at length effected, but its progress was so gradual, that he was, for a long time, incapacitated from attending to the business of the nation. His restoration to health was forwarded by a temporary retreat to his favourite residence at Chelsea, from which Illness and recovery.

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Period II. 1714 to 1720. May 11th.

place, he writes to his brother, in theſe terms. "I have been here about ten days, and find ſo great a benefit from the air, that I gather ſtrength daily, and hope as much time more will recover me from the loweſt and weakeſt condition that ever poor mortal was alive in, and I ſhall be able to get to town and do buſineſs again *." Congratulations on the recovery of a man, to whom the Proteſtant eſtabliſhment owed ſo much, and who was the ſoul of his party, flowed in from all quarters. Numerous verſes were made on the event, and Rowe, the great damatic poet, did not diſdain to write a ballad on the occaſion †.

Septennial bill.

During this interval, the ſeptennial bill was brought into parliament. Although Walpole was not able to ſupport this meaſure in the houſe of commons, yet, as it had been previouſly arranged with his concurrence, and as he alſo conſtantly oppoſed the repeal, it has always been juſtly conſidered an act of his adminiſtration.

This memorable bill, which is to be conſidered as the bulwark of our civil and religious liberties, becauſe it effectually ſupported the houſe of Brunſwick on the throne; was undoubtedly one of the moſt daring uſes, or, according to the repreſentations of its opponents, abuſes of parliamentary power that ever was committed ſince the revolution: for, it not only lengthened the duration of future parliaments, but the members

* Walpole Papers.

† See Collection of Whig Ballads, or Pills to purge State Melancholy, part 2.

who

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who had been elected only for three years, prolonged, of their own authority, the term of their continuance for four years more *. The great body of the Whigs, influenced by these considerations, were, at the first proposition, averse to the measure, and did not agree to support it, till mature deliberation had convinced them of its necessity. During the debates which took place on this occasion, the arguments of opposition and defence, were not unequal to the importance and dignity of the subject. We, who live at this distance of time, without being heated by the warmth of party, without sufficiently considering the temper and state of the nation, and without weighing the peculiar circumstances which occasioned its introduction, must confess, that in theory, the arguments of those who opposed it, are the most specious and convincing; but if we recur to the events of the times, and the state of the country, we must applaud the wisdom of those who sacrificed speculation to practice. It is the remark of a judicious author, "That the act of septennial parliaments was passed, when

* This has been thought by many an unconstitutional exertion of their authority; and the reason given is, that those who had a power delegated to them for three years only, could have no right to extend that term to seven years. But this has always appeared to me to be a fallacious mode of considering the subject. Before the triennial act, 6 W. & M. the duration of parliament was only limited by the pleasure or death of the king; and it never can be supposed that the next, or any succeeding parliament, had not the power of repealing the triennial act; and if that had been done, then, as before, they might have sat seventeen or seventy years. It is certainly true, that the simple repeal of a former statute would have extended their continuance much beyond what was done by the septennial act.

Blackstone's Commentaries, v. II. p. 189, *Christian's Edition.*

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Period II. 1714 to 1720. the kingdom was threatened with an immediate invaſion, when a rebellion had but juſt been quelled, and when the peace and ſafety of the nation depended on the uſe of this power by parliament. Such was the opinion of the people at that time, and the act met with general approbation, from the general conviction of its neceſſity *."

That the neceſſity muſt have been great and evident, appears from the conſideration, that it was ſupported by men of the firſt rank, independence, and probity in the kingdom; that in the houſe of lords, where it was propoſed by the duke of Devonſhire, there were only 36 voices againſt it, and that, on being ſent to the houſe of commons, there was a majority of 264 againſt 121. But whatever opinion might be formed of the juſtice of the right exerciſed by parliament, in repealing the triennial act and ſubſtituting ſeptennial parliaments, yet it can ſcarcely be conteſted, that it has in effect been highly advantageous to the well-being of the legiſlature, and to the real intereſt of the nation. The ſpeaker, Onſlow, who was no ill judge of parliamentary proceedings, was frequently heard to declare †, That the paſſing of the ſeptennial bill formed the era of the emancipation of the Britiſh houſe of commons from its former dependence on the crown and the houſe of lords. From that period it has riſen in conſequence and ſtrength.

* Adams's Letter againſt Paine.
† Communicated by Sir George Colebrook.

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Chapter 12. 1716.

We who live to enjoy the benefits of an act, which has greatly contributed to set bounds to faction, which has relieved us from the mischievous effects of too frequent elections, and from the interference of foreign powers; which has given permanence and independence to our councils, and prevented those frequent changes of men and measures, which left us open to every fluctuation of public sentiment, to every impulse of craft and artifice, we ought not too severely to scrutinize the arguments which were used in defence of a measure recommended by the necessity of the times, and which subsequent experience has demonstrated to be no less beneficial and prudent, than bold and decisive. The immediate effect is best ascertained by the unceasing clamours of a desperate faction, whose hopes were at once destroyed by a step which placed at a great distance the chance of influencing the public mind, and producing dangerous ferments by the accustomed means of popular delusion. History enables us to ascertain its more remote consequences; and whoever fairly considers the permanence of peace, the energy of war, and amelioration of jurisprudence which have resulted to the nation; the wisdom of counsel, boldness of eloquence, and increase of importance which have distinguished the commons, since the period of its formation, must acknowledge that many of the most inestimable blessings of our constitution are to be attributed to this measure, which originally appeared to invade its first principles. It is

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to be hoped, that there are few perſons who would deſire to replunge the nation into that feveriſh ſtate which attends frequent elections in cities and counties, and to revive that perpetual enmity which muſt ariſe from the frequent agitation of contradictory intereſts, and the inveſtigation of claims, which can hardly be once decided, before they are again conteſted.

Obſervation of lord Somers.

Although a queſtion like this cannot be decided by the opinion of any individual, yet ſurely the judgment of lord Somers, the conſtant friend of liberty, and the oracle of the revolution, is intitled to ſome reſpect, and the time and manner of giving it, render it peculiarly intereſting. While the bill was in agitation, Dr. Friend, the celebrated phyſician, called on lord Townſhend, and informed him, that lord Somers was at that moment reſtored to the full poſſeſſion of his faculties, by a fit of the gout, which ſuſpended the effect of his paralytic complaint. Townſhend immediately waited on Somers, who, as ſoon as he came into the room embraced him, and ſaid, "I have juſt heard of the work in which you are engaged, and congratulate you upon it; I never approved the triennial bill, and always conſidered it in effect, the reverſe of what it was intended. You have my hearty approbation in this buſineſs, and *I think it will be the greateſt ſupport poſſible to the liberty of the country**."

* Communicated by lord Sydney, and Charles Townſhend, eſquire, who frequently heard this anecdote related by their father, the late honourable Thomas Townſhend, ſon of lord Townſhend.

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Chapter 12. 1716.

The king resolves to go to Hanover.

The impatience of the king to visit his German dominions now became so great, as totally to overcome every restraint of prudence, and suggestion of propriety, and imperiously to demand indulgence, though the unsettled state of the public mind, from the effect of rebellion, hardly yet entirely suppressed, and the prejudice excited by the new measures, both of legislation and prosecution, should have opposed insuperable obstacles to his desire. The ministry were considerably embarrassed on this occasion; and drew up a strong remonstrance, representing the inconveniences which would result from the projected journey. This remonstrance, however, not only failed of success, but so far exasperated the king, that he declared he would not endure a longer confinement in this kingdom. Under these circumstances, the ministry could not venture to make any further opposition. When the act was passed, which settled the succession on the house of Brunswick, it was accompanied with various restrictions, limiting the future sovereign in several instances. Some of these restrictions had been repealed during the reign of queen Anne. But the clause which restrained the king from going out of the kingdom, without consent of parliament, still subsisted. It must be allowed to have been a necessary limitation, and its continuance would have been highly beneficial to the true interests of England. For no circumstance more impeded public business, or more alienated the public mind, than the frequent visits which the two first sovereigns of the house of

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Period II. 1714 to 1720.

Brunſwick made to the electorate of Hanover. This predilection to their native country, was in them both natural and excuſable; yet, for the benefit of England, it ought to have been confined within due bounds. Although it is not probable that the parliament would ever have with-held their conſent, yet the neceſſity of obtaining that conſent would doubtleſs have checked the too frequent repetition of the demand, and have prevented the abſence of the ſovereign in times of public emergency. But at the preſent juncture it was conſidered more reſpectful to obtain a repeal, than to ſubject the king to the neceſſity of obtaining a parliamentary conſent, for which meſſages muſt have been ſent to both houſes, previous to each voyage. When the motion was made by Sir John Cope, to repeal the reſtricting clauſe, and ſeconded by Hampden, it paſſed unanimouſly, not a ſingle member, amongſt many who were diſſatisfied with the ſucceſſion of the Hanover line, venturing to make the ſlighteſt oppoſition to the repeal of a clauſe, which, however conformable to the hopes of the nation, could not but be conſidered as invidious and diſgraceful to the new ſovereign. The miniſters were often obliged to make the moſt preſſing remonſtrances, as well to prevent the abſence of the king, as to haſten his return; theſe remonſtrances were often ineffectual, but always offenſive; and Walpole, during the courſe of his adminiſtration, lamented an evil which he had in vain attempted to remedy, and which nothing but the continuance of the reſtraining clauſe, or an abſolute ceſſion of the electorate, could have prevented.

Repeal of the reſtraining clauſe in the act of ſettlement.

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prevented. Some authors, in treating of these long and frequent absences, have thrown out reproachful suggestions on the framers of the act of settlement, for not insisting that a foreign prince should resign his continental dominions before he assumed the possession of the crown. Such a provision did not escape the sagacity of the legislators of the day, and would, most probably, have been carried into effect, but for the obvious certainty that no prince would renounce the quiet possession of his continental dominions, however small, to acquire the brilliant, but precarious dignity of sovereign of a large kingdom, exposed to the evils of a powerful faction, and the dangers of a disputed succession. These considerations deterred the framers of the bill from proposing a measure, which would infallibly have frustrated all their other efforts for the preservation of our civil and religious liberties. Chapter 12. 1716.

This difficult point being adjusted, another question, of equal delicacy, occurred, which related to the method of carrying on the government during the king's absence. The most obvious and natural method was the appointment of the prince of Wales to the regency; but this measure was obstructed by an unfortunate jealousy which the king entertained of his son. The king's jealousy of the prince of Wales.

This misunderstanding had already commenced at Hanover, before the death of queen Anne. Sophia had often behaved to George the First with distance and reserve, and did not always consult him in regard to the affairs of England. She was

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extremely fond of her grandſon, and in ſeveral inſtances of great importance, had acted in concurrence with him alone, and particularly, the demand of the writ for him to ſit in the houſe of peers, as duke of Cambridge, was made without the knowledge*, or againſt the inclination of George the Firſt. This preference of her grandſon, naturally created a coldneſs between the father and ſon, which was afterwards increaſed by the artful propoſal of the Tories, in voting the civil liſt, that a ſeparate revenue of £.100,000 per annum ſhould be ſettled on the prince of Wales. The motion was negatived by the influence of the Whigs †. The eagerneſs which the prince expreſſed to obtain the title and office of regent, augmented the diſguſt of the king. Conſcious that the prince was inſtigated in moſt of his proceedings by the duke of Argyle, his groom of the ſtole, whoſe faſcinating manners and ſpecious addreſs had gained a great aſcendancy over the prince, he inſiſted on the diſmiſſion of the duke. Under theſe impreſſions, the king was unwilling to entruſt him with the government, without joining other perſons in the commiſſion, and without limiting his authority by the moſt rigorous reſtrictions. With a view of forming a regency under thoſe conditions, he ſubmitted his wiſhes, through the channel of Bernſdorf, to the council. Their anſwer on this ſubject, declared, that, "on a careful peruſal of precedents, finding no inſtance of perſons being

* Communicated by lady Suffolk, who was then at Hanover, to the late earl of Orford. See alſo Chap. 8. and Clarendon's Letter to Secretary Bromley. Correſpondence, Period I.

† Chandler.

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joined in commiſſion with the prince of Wales, and few, if any reſtrictions, they were of opinion, that the conſtant tenor of ancient practice could not conveniently be receded from*." Although he reluctantly ſubmitted to conſign to the prince the ſole direction of affairs, yet, inſtead of the title of regent, he appointed him *guardian of the realm and lieutenant*, an office unknown in England ſince it was enjoyed by Edward the black prince†. Chapter 13. 1716.

Having made this arrangement, and removed the duke of Argyle from the houſehold of the prince, and from the command of the army in Scotland, he committed to Townſhend and Walpole the principal direction of affairs, and, accompanied by ſecretary Stanhope, took his departure from England on the 9th of July, and arrived on the 15th at Hanover. Departure from England.

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH:

1716.

State and Diſunion of the Miniſtry.—Cabals of Sunderland.—Intrigues and Venality of the Hanoverian Junto.

We have hitherto contemplated the miniſtry in which Townſhend and Walpole took the lead, in the higheſt degree proſperous and reſpectable. It would naturally be ſuppoſed, that Diſunion of the miniſtry.

* Letter from Lord Townſhend to Bernſdorf. Correſpondence, Period II.

† Political State of Great Britain, 1716.—Tindal.

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union and tranquillity in the cabinet were indiſpenſably neceſſary to produce ſuch wiſe counſels and vigorous meaſures, but this ſuppoſition is not verified by fact. The ſeeds of diſcontent had already taken root, and were bringing to maturity by the petty intrigues and ſelfiſh cabals of thoſe Hanoverian miſtreſſes and miniſters who had followed the fortunes of the king.

Sunderland diſcoutented.

The principal perſon who fomented the diſunion in the cabinet, was Charles earl of Sunderland, whoſe father, Robert, is ſo notorious in the annals of this country, for his great abilities and conſummate treachery. He had married Anne, ſecond daughter of the duke of Marlborough, and had ſerved under his father-in-law, both in a military and diplomatic capacity. The origin of the miſunderſtanding between him and Townſhend, may be dated from the death of queen Anne. At that period, Sunderland, as the great leader of the Whigs, and in conſideration of his ſervices to the Hanover family, was led to expect that he ſhould be placed at the head of the adminiſtration, and become the perſon under whoſe auſpices the new cabinet was to be formed. Bothmar had repreſented him as a man who had always ſhewn more attachment to the king than any other. He had firſt recommended Sunderland to be lord lieutenant of Ireland, and Townſhend to be ſecretary of ſtate; but on Sunderland's expreſſing his deſire to have that office, Bothmar propoſed that Townſhend ſhould be provided with another place,

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This arrangement was firſt ſuggeſted on the 13th of Auguſt, yet, on the 31ſt of the ſame month, Bothmar expreſſed his wiſhes to Robethon, that it might be given to Townſhend, although Sunderland had aſked for it*. In fact, the king was at this period influenced by Bothmar, Bothmar was wholly governed by Townſhend, and the new adminiſtration was principally ſettled by him. Although Sunderland was received with ſingular attention by the king on his arrival, yet it is remarkable, that his name does not appear among the lords juſtices added in the liſt communicated by Bothmar to the ſeven great officers of the realm. The aſpiring Sunderland, under whom Townſhend had hitherto acted a ſubordinate part, could not brook this preference; though he did not openly ſhew his diſguſt, yet he ſcarcely took any active part in defending the meaſures of government; he who was before accuſtomed to make a conſpicuous figure in every debate, ſeems to have remained almoſt uniformly ſilent; and from the acceſſion of George the Firſt, till the beginning of 1717, his name ſeldom occurs in the proceedings of the houſe of lords. He had been nominated lord lieutenant of Ireland, which he conſidered a ſpecies of baniſhment, and as a place far below his expectations. Soon after the death of the marquis of Wharton, he was appointed privy ſeal. But his promotion to this high office did not remove his diſguſt.

* Macpherſon's Papers, vol. 2.

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The ſpirit of diſcontent had not been confined to Sunderland. Nottingham, whoſe Tory principles could never coaleſce with a Whig adminiſtration, and whoſe vehement interference in favour of the condemned rebel lords had given offence, was diſmiſſed from the preſidentſhip of the council.

Nottingham returns to the Tories.

Somerſet diſmiſſed from the place of maſter of the horſe.

Somerſet was removed from his poſt of maſter of the horſe, on account of ſome indiſcreet expreſſions on the arreſt of his ſon-in-law, Sir William Wyndham.

Halifax diſaffected.

The earl of Halifax had eſtimated his ſervices and talents at ſo high a rate, that he expected to have been appointed lord high treaſurer: created firſt-commiſſioner, he was highly chagrined; nor was his diſguſt removed by the garter, the title of earl, and the transfer of the place of auditor of the exchequer to his nephew. Inflamed by diſappointed ambition, he entered into cabals with the Tory leaders, for the removal of thoſe with whom he had ſo long cordially acted; but his death, on the 10th of May 1715, put an end to his intrigues*.

Dies.

Marlborough diſſatisfied.

Marlborough alſo was among the diſſatisfied. Soon after the death of queen Anne, Bothmar ſays of him, "He is not pleaſed that he is not of the regency, and that there is any man but the king higher than him in this country†;" and his diſguſt was not diminiſhed after the king's arrival: For although he was appointed commander in chief, yet he did not enjoy the ſmalleſt ſhare of power or confidence. During the campaign of

* Tindal, vol. 18. p. 371.

† Macpherſon's Papers, vol. 2. p. 640.

1708,

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1708, when George the First, then elector of Hanover, commanded the Imperialists, Marlborough had contrived, that no troops or supplies were sent to the Rhine, but that the whole force was destined for the army in Flanders, by which arrangement George had been obliged to act on the defensive, and could not distinguish his command by any successful operation against the enemy. This conduct was never forgotten by the king; and in consequence of his resentment, Marlborough, though commander in chief, could not obtain even a lieutenancy for a friend; and he not unfrequently requested Pulteney, who was secretary at war, to solicit in his room, adding, "but do not say it is for me, for whatever I ask is sure to be denied." Chapter 13. 1716.

To these discontents Walpole alludes in a private letter to his brother Horace, on the removal of Nottingham *, "I don't well know what account to give you of our situation here. *There are storms in the air, but I doubt not, they will soon be blown over.*" In this instance, however, his prediction was not verified; Sunderland increased his party with a number of disaffected persons. He particularly gained among the Whigs, Carleton, Cadogan, Lechmere, and Hamden; courted the Tories; entered into cabals against his colleagues; and was prepared to use all his efforts, and employ any opportunities which might offer, to prejudice the king against them †; nor were such means and opportunities wanting. Walpole too secure.

* Walpole Papers.

† Walpole's letter to Stanhope, July 30th, 1716.—Correspondence, Period II.

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Period II. 1714 to 1720. Hanoverian venality.

One of the greateſt difficulties which Townſhend and Walpole had to encounter, aroſe from the management of the German junto, who principally governed the king. This junto, at his acceſſion, and for ſome time after, conſiſted of his two miſtreſſes, the ducheſs of Kendal and the counteſs of Darlington, and his German miniſters and favourites.

Character of the ducheſs of Kendal.

Erengard Meleſina, baroneſs of Schulenburgh, and princeſs of Eberſtein, was the favourite miſtreſs of George the Firſt, when electoral prince, and after his ſeparation from his wife, the unfortunate Sophia, princeſs of Zell, he is ſaid to have eſpouſed her with his left hand, a ſpecies of marriage not uncommon in Germany. She accompanied the king to England, and was, in 1716, created baroneſs of Dundalk, counteſs and marchioneſs of Dungannon, and ducheſs of Munſter of the kingdom of Ireland; and, in 1718, made a peereſs of Great Britain, by the title of baroneſs of Glaſtonbury, counteſs of Feverſham, and ducheſs of Kendal *, by which title ſhe is commonly known. Her influence over the king was ſo conſiderable, that the different parties in the cabinet, and the leaders in oppoſition, paid the moſt obſequious court, and even the empreſs of Germany maintained a private correſpondence with her, with a view to induce the king to renew the connection between England and the houſe of Auſtria. This aſcendancy is the more ſurpriſing, when it is con-

* Extinct peerage.

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ſidered that ſhe did not poſſeſs much beauty of countenance, or elegance of perſon; for the electreſs Sophia, pointing her out to Mrs. Howard, ſaid *, "Do you ſee that maukin? you would ſcarcely believe that ſhe has captivated my ſon;" and according to Sir Robert Walpole, (whoſe opinion, however, as he did not readily ſpeak in any foreign language, and ſhe could not converſe in Engliſh, muſt be received with caution) her intellects were mean and contemptible. Money was with her the principal and prevailing conſideration, and he was often heard to ſay, ſhe was ſo venal a creature, that ſhe would have ſold the king's honour for a ſhilling advance to the beſt bidder †. She affected great and conſtant regularity in her public devotions, frequently attending ſeveral Lutheran chapels in the ſame day. The miniſter of the Lutheran church in the Savoy, refuſed to admit her to the ſacrament; but ſhe was received at the church of the ſame communion in the city ‡. Chapter 13. 1716.

His other miſtreſs was Sophia Charlotte, daughter of the count of Platen, and wife of baron Kilmanſeck, maſter of the horſe, from whom ſhe was ſeparated. On the death of her huſband, in 1721, ſhe was created counteſs of Leinſter in the kingdom of Ireland, and in 1722, made a Britiſh peereſs by the title of baroneſs of Brentford, and counteſs of Darlington §. She was a woman of great beauty, Character of the counteſs of Darlington.

* From Lord Orford.

† Etough.—Minutes of a converſation with Sir Robert Walpole.

‡ Etough.

§ Extinct Peerage.

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but became extremely corpulent as ſhe advanced in years. Her power over the king was not equal to that of the duchefs of Kendal; but although ſhe was younger, and more accompliſhed than her rival, ſeveral perſons about the court, conceiving her influence to be greater than it really was, ineffectually endeavoured to riſe by her means. Her character for rapacity was not inferior to that of the duchefs of Kendal.

Character of Bothmar.

The Hanoverian miniſters who had the principal influence over the king, were baron Bothmar, count Bernſdorf, and Robethon. Baron Bothmar had been the king's principal agent in England during the latter years of queen Anne. By his advice George had almoſt uniformly acted; and it was principally owing to his interpoſition, that Townſhend was entruſted with the chief power, and became the head of the new adminiſtration. Bothmar now conceived that his ſervices could not be too amply rewarded by the miniſter to whoſe elevation he had greatly contributed; he took umbrage on finding that his recommendations were often rejected, and that ſufficient reſpect was not paid to his opinion.

Bernſdorf.

Count Bernſdorf, of an illuſtrious family, ſolid talents, and conſiderable experience, was the miniſter whom George conſulted in foreign affairs. On his arrival in England, he was anxious to increaſe his conſequence, and improve his fortune. But finding his views oppoſed by Townſhend and Walpole, he became diſguſted, and joining with Bothmar

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mar and the miſtreſſes, was prepared to forward any attempt to drive them from the helm. Chapter 13. 1716.

The party was farther ſtrengthened by the acceſſion of Robethon, the king's French ſecretary. This man was of a French refugee family, and became private ſecretary to king William, from whoſe ſervice he entered into that of the houſe of Brunſwick. He ſoon became confidential ſecretary, firſt of the duke of Zell, and afterwards of George the Firſt, when elector of Hanover, and was the perſon employed in carrying on the confidential correſpondence with England *. This private intercourſe gave him a conſiderable aſcendancy over his maſter; and being a man of addreſs, great knowledge of mankind, and well acquainted with the leading members in both houſes of parliament, he was enabled to act a conſpicuous part. His ſituation with the king rendered him inſolent and preſumptuous; his neceſſities were great, and his venality was ſo notorious as to excite the diſpleaſure, and call forth the remonſtrances of Townſhend and Walpole; conſequently, he became their inveterate enemy, zealouſly promoted the views of Sunderland, and attached himſelf to thoſe who were labouring to obtain their diſmiſſion. Robethon.

To theſe perſons of oſtenſible conſequence, muſt be added two Turks, known by the names of Muſtapha and Mahomet †. They had been taken priſoners Two Turks in the ſervice of the king.

* Macpherſon's Papers, vol. 2.

† Pope has mentioned one of theſe Turks in terms of approbation, in his moral eſſays, Epiſtle 2nd, to a lady.

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Period II. 1714 to 1720.

priſoners by the Imperaliſts in Hungary, and had ſerved the king when electoral prince, who was wounded in that campaign, with ſuch zeal and fidelity, that he took them to Hanover, brought them to England, and made them pages of the back-ſtairs. Their influence over their maſter was ſo great, that their names are mentioned in a diſpatch of count Broglio to the king of France, as poſſeſſing a large ſhare of the king's confidence. Theſe low foreigners obtained conſiderable ſums of money for recommendation to places.

Rapacity and ambition of theſe perſons.

Theſe miſtreſſes, miniſters, and favourites, coming from a poor electorate, conſidered England as a kind of land of promiſe, and at the ſame time ſo precarious a poſſeſſion, that they endeavoured to enrich themſelves with all poſſible ſpeed *. With this view they ſold their influence over their maſter at a high price, and diſpoſed of all the places and honours which the king could confer, without the intervention of his Engliſh miniſters. Their venality aroſe to ſo great a height, as obliged Walpole to remonſtrate againſt them; but the king almoſt ſanctioned the abuſe, by replying with a ſmile, "I ſuppoſe you are alſo paid for your

"From peer or biſhop 'tis no eaſy thing,
"To draw the man who loves his God, or king,
"Alas! I copy (or my draught would fail)
"From HONEST MAH'MET, or plain parſon Hale."

Portraits of the two Turks are on the great ſtair-caſe in Kenſington palace. Lyſon's Environs of London, vol. 3. p. 103.

* During the whole reign of George the Firſt, after the reſignation of the duke of Somerſet, no maſter of the horſe was appointed; the profits of the place were appropriated to the ducheſs of Kendal. The emoluments of the maſterſhip of the buck hounds, were alſo reſerved for one of the Germans.

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recommendations *." Private emoluments, and concealed advantages, did not however satisfy their rapaciousness; they began to aim at the honours of rank and pre-eminence. The ladies were desirous of being made peeresses; Bothmar and Bernsdorf, aspired to a seat in the house of lords; while Robethon, affected to content himself with the title of baronet. To these pretensions, which the conduct of William had sanctioned, the act of settlement presented an insuperable barrier. Interest soon enabled them to discover that the regulations of that act did not extend to Ireland; the baroness of Schulenberg was gratified with the title of duchess of Munster, and the Irish establishment loaded with pensions. But this advancement did not satisfy that ambitious woman, who was less gratified by this title, than irritated against Townshend and Walpole, for opposing her demand of being created an English peeress. The ministers and secretary, animated with a similar rancour, behaved with great insolence towards the leaders of the cabinet, insomuch that Walpole once, in the presence of the king, rebuked the presumption of an impertinent assertion, by the stern reproof, "Mentiris impudentissime *." In consequence of these repeated altercations, the Hanoverian crew endeavoured to counteract, by their intrigues, the influence of Townshend and Walpole, and infuse into the king's mind, such suspicions and prejudices as, assisted by other intrigues, ended in the dismission of those able ministers.

Chapter 13. 1716.

Resisted by Townshend and Walpole.

* From Lord Orford.

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Period II. 1714 to 1720.

Theſe, and many other miſchiefs, which were the neceſſary conſequences of the introduction of a foreign family, cannot be concealed or controverted. Yet, while we relate and deplore them in their full latitude, let us not ſo far forget the bleſſings derived from the ſame ſource, as to overlook our eſcape from ſtill greater evils. This event, which was occaſionally productive of conſiderable inconveniences, was the price paid for the preſervation of our religion and conſtitution. The option was neceſſarily made between Hanover and Rome; between civil and religious liberty, accompanied by temporary diſadvantages, or papal and deſpotic tyranny, followed by ſure and permanent degradation,

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH:

1716.

Acquiſition of Bremen and Verden.—Alliance with France.

Acquiſition of Bremen and Verden.

HANOVER now became the centre of the moſt important negotiations. The two great objects of theſe negotiations were to complete the acquiſition of Bremen and Verden, and to ſecure tranquillity at home, by a ſtrict union with France.

At the peace of Weſtphalia, the archbiſhopric of Bremen, and biſhopric of Verden, were ceded to Sweden. But their commodious ſituation, between the territories of the houſe of Brunſwick

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and the ſea, rendered them a deſirable object of acquiſition to the dukes of Zell and Brunſwick, and thoſe princes had formed ſeveral attempts to obtain poſſeſſion, but had always failed of ſucceſs. At length George the Firſt obtained what his anceſtors could not accompliſh. Frederic the Fourth of Denmark, having, in 1712, conquered Holſtein, Sleſwic, Bremen, and Verden, and unable to retain them, or even to reſiſt the arms of Sweden, on the return of Charles the Twelfth from Turkey, found it prudent to cede a part, that he might not be deprived of the whole. He accordingly concluded a treaty, which though long ſettled, was not ratified till the 17th of July 1715, with George, as elector of Hanover; by which it was agreed that Bremen and Verden ſhould be put into the poſſeſſion of the king of England, on the condition, of paying £.150,000, and declaring war againſt Sweden. In conſequence of this treaty, George joined the coalition againſt Sweden, and a Britiſh fleet was, in 1715, diſpatched to the Baltic, with the pretence of protecting our trade againſt the Swediſh depredations, but for the real purpoſe of compelling Sweden to accept a ſum of money as an equivalent for thoſe dominions. Chapter 14. 1716.

The king of Sweden, provoked at the conduct of George the Firſt, and well aware, that in the capacity of elector only, he would not have joined the confederacy againſt him, directed his efforts of vengeance againſt the Engliſh; his miniſters at London, and at the Hague, caballed with the diſaffected in England, and preparations were making

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to invade Great Britain, with a conſiderable army, in favour of the dethroned family.

The Pretender did not fail taking advantage of this tranſaction, to render the new * king odious to his Engliſh ſubjects; and he artfully obſerved, in his new manifeſto, "Whilſt the principal powers engaged in the late wars enjoy the bleſſings of peace, and are attentive to diſcharge their debts, and eaſe their people, Great Britain, in the midſt of peace, feels all the load of a war, new debts are contracted, new armies are raiſed at home, Dutch forces are brought into theſe kingdoms; and *by taking poſſeſſion of the Duchy of Bremen, in violation of the public faith*, a door is opened by the uſurper to let in an inundation of foreigners from abroad, and to reduce theſe nations to a ſtate of dependence on one of the moſt inconſiderable provinces of the empire."

The advocates for Townſhend and Walpole, have aſſerted that they uniformly counteracted the acquiſition of Bremen and Verden, and that their oppoſition to that favourite object of Hanoverian politics, was the principal cauſe of their ſubſequent diſgrace. But whatever blame or merit reſults from that meaſure, attaches to them; for I diſcover among the papers committed to my inſpection, unequivocal proofs, that they approved, in the ſtrongeſt manner, the propoſed acquiſition †. Slingelandt, afterwards penſionary of Holland, and the confidential friend of lord Townſhend, had

* Tindal, vol. 18. p. 451.
† Townſhend Papers.

declared

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declared, in a letter dated March 10th, 1717, "As much as the crown of Great Britain is superior to the electoral cap, so much is the king interested to sacrifice Bremen and Verden for a peace, rather than continue any longer in a war." But Townshend was so far from approving the sacrifice, that he observed in answer; "I am of opinion, that every attempt should be made to induce the king of Sweden to make peace, without depriving him of any of his dominions situated out of the empire, for in regard to his German provinces, I must tell you frankly, without any partiality to the pretensions of the king, but simply with a view to the interests of Great Britain and Holland, that we must not suffer Sweden to retain any longer those gates of the empire, which, since the peace of Westphalia, she has never made use of but for the purpose of introducing confusion and disorder, or of turning Germany from the pursuit of its true interests against France." And in another part of the same letter, he adds, "I lay it down as a principle, that for the advantage and tranquillity of Europe, the king of Sweden ought to be deprived of those provinces which have supplied him with the means of doing so much mischief." Chapter 14. 1716. March 17.

Horace Walpole, in his pamphlet, "The Interest of Great Britain steadily pursued," has amply expatiated on this subject, and explained the motives which induced his brother to favour this purchase. "It is the interest of this country," he observes, "that those two provinces, which command the navigation of the Elbe and Weser, the

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Period II. 1714 to 1720.

only inlets from the Britiſh ſeas into Germany, and which, in caſe of any diſturbance in the North, are moſt capable of protecting or interrupting the Britiſh trade to Hamburgh, ſhould rather be annexed to the king's electoral dominions, than remain in the hands of Denmark, who has frequently formed pretenſions on that city; or of Sweden, who has moleſted our commerce in the Baltic."

Treaty with France.

The next great object which the Britiſh cabinet had in view, was to ſecure the tranquillity of Great Britain, by forming ſuch alliances with the European powers, as would counteract the intrigues of the Pretender abroad, deprive him of foreign aſſiſtance, and awe his followers into ſubmiſſion.

Townſhend and Walpole were well aware, that the danger of invaſions and interior troubles, did not ſo much proceed from the efforts of the diſaffected at home, as from the hopes of aſſiſtance from France. If the proſpect of French interpoſition could be removed, or the effect counteracted, tranquillity would be the neceſſary and unavoidable conſequence. To attain that great end, only two methods could be adopted; the one to form ſo intimate a connection with the Emperor and Holland, as to ſet France at defiance; and the other to ſecure the friendſhip of France, and to employ the public and private efforts of that power, which had hitherto either openly or covertly promoted the reſtoration of the dethroned family, and encouraged the efforts of the Jacobites in Great Britain, againſt that very family, and in ſupport of the Proteſtant ſucceſſion.

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Chapter 14. 1716.

No charge was ever more frequently or more violently urged againſt the principles of the adminiſtration, which Walpole either directed, or in which he co-operated before he acquired the power and influence of prime miniſter, than that of deſerting the houſe of Auſtria, our natural ally, and of joining with France, our inveterate enemy. I ſhall therefore lay before the reader the motives which induced the two brother miniſters to prefer, at this particular juncture, the connection with France to the union with the Houſe of Auſtria. To Townſhend and Walpole is undoubtedly due the credit or reproach of having firſt formed the project of that alliance, and of having carried that ſcheme into execution, in oppoſition to the opinion of Sunderland and Stanhope, and in direct contradiction to the firſt views of the Hanoverian miniſters.

Death of Louis the Fourteenth.

The death of Louis the Fourteenth, on the 1ſt of September 1715, had given a new aſpect to the affairs of France and of Europe, and haſtened the final concluſion of thoſe complicated negotiations which the treaty of Utrecht had entailed upon a Britiſh adminiſtration. Although, during the latter days of that bigotted and ambitious monarch, the bleſſings of peace were the conſtant theme of his converſation, a paſſion for glory, and the frenzy of war, ſtill lurked in his heart. His cabals with the mal-contents in England, his connivance at the intrigues of Ormond and Bolingbroke at Paris, the permiſſion of providing arms and ammunition, and the preparations making at Dunkirk

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Period II. 1714 to 1720.

for an attack upon England, were too manifeſt to eſcape obſervation.

Under theſe circumſtances, the earl of Stair, who had ſuperſeded Prior in his embaſſy at Paris, made ſecret overtures to the duke of Orleans, who was apprehenſive leſt the king of Spain ſhould wreſt the regency out of his hands; and at a meeting with du Bois, the confidential agent * of the duke of Orleans, promiſed the aſſiſtance of England to ſecure the regency to the duke on the death of Louis the Fourteenth, and his ſucceſſion to the crown of France, ſhould the dauphin, afterwards Louis the Fifteenth, die without iſſue. Stair reiterated theſe aſſurances in a perſonal interview with the duke; who ſolemnly pledged himſelf not to aſſiſt the Pretender, and to demoliſh the ſluices at Mardyke. Similar offers were renewed, in a ſtill ſtronger manner, on the deceaſe of the king of France. Hints were at the ſame time thrown out, that the true way to eſtabliſh a perfect underſtanding between the two countries, would be to ſend the Pretender out of Lorraine, and his two adherents, Ormond and Bolingbroke, out of France. But the duke of Orleans had no ſooner ſucceeded in annulling the teſtament of Louis the Fourteenth, and ſecured to himſelf the regency without reſtrictions, than he ceaſed to expreſs himſelf ſo warm a friend to George the Firſt; but while he gave aſſurances that he would demoliſh Mardyke, anſwered nothing poſitive with reſpect to the Pretender, Ormond, and Bolingbroke, and ſecretly aſ-

Conduct of the regent.

* Hardwicke State Papers, vol. 2.

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Chapter 14. 1716.

sisted, or at least connived at, the invasion of Great Britain.

When these attempts of the Pretender had failed of success, and the standard of rebellion was overthrown, the regent found it his interest * to court the friendship of England, whose assistance might be necessary in securing to him the crown of France in case of the death of Louis the Fifteenth, who was a weak and sickly boy. It was generally suspected that Philip the Fifth would not think himself bound by his renunciation of the crown of France; and as Spain, under the administration of cardinal Alberoni, was beginning to awake from her lethargy, and to make vast preparations both by land and sea, du Bois suggested that the sole purpose of these exertions was to assert the rights of Philip to the crown of France. The regent accordingly renewed his overtures; but the king, incensed at his former equivocal conduct, would not cordially listen to his offers, and opened a negotiation with the court of Vienna and the States General for a separate defensive alliance. In consequence of these resolutions, the ancient alliance with the United Provinces was renewed at Westminster on the 16th of February; a new defensive treaty with the Emperor was concluded on the

Alliances with the Emperor and Holland.

* The sudden change of behaviour of the regent and his court, occasioned by the suppression of the rebellion, appears in lord Stair's journal, "A la cour on est tout etonné; les plus sages commencent à traiter le Chevalier de St. George du Pretendant. Il y a deux jours qu'il etoit le roy d'Angleterre par tout, et tout le monde avoit levé le masque. Il n'y avoit plus en seul François, quasi personne de la cour, qui mettoit le pied chez moy."

Hardwicke's State Papers, vol. 2. p. 550.

25th

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25th of May; and the Britiſh cabinet informed the regent, that the departure of the Pretender to the other ſide of the Alps, was an indiſpenſable preliminary. In vain France attempted to prevent the union of the three powers, by offering to conclude a defenſive alliance with Great Britain and the United Provinces, and in caſe of a war with the Emperor, to obſerve a neutrality in the Low Countries. The inſidiouſneſs of this propoſal, did not eſcape the obſervation of Townſhend, who, in a letter to Horace Walpole, reprobated it as chimerical and full of deluſion *; and expreſſed a determination to form ſuch alliances with the Emperor and the States General, as would let the French ſee, that if they had a mind to fall out with one of them, they would certainly bring the reſt into the quarrel.

* Letter from Townſhend to Horace Walpole, 27th December 1715. Walpole Papers.

"This morning the three mails, which came in from Holland, brought me your letters of the 27th and 31ſt N. S. which I have read to his majeſty, who was glad to ſee that the French ambaſſador was diſappointed in his hopes of the great effects his propoſal of neutrality for the Auſtrian Low Countries, in caſe of a war, would have in Holland. Indeed the project ſeems ſo chimerical, and is ſo full of deluſion, that it was hardly fit to be ſeriouſly offered by one, or received by the other. And none but France, who is uſed to contrive ſuch amuſing ſchemes, could pretend to propoſe to ſtipulate with a third power, a neutrality for the dominions belonging to another, who may not conſent to it. For what could ſuch a convention between the Dutch and the French ſignify, if the emperor, who is maſter of the country, ſhould not think it for his intereſt to mind it? Methinks we are giving opportunities to France to play over the ſame game they did after the peace of Ryſwick, when the terrible apprehenſions of a new war, made us and the Dutch run into the meaſures of the Partition Treaty, which was believed might be a wonderful preſervative againſt a war, but in effect, proved the ſource, and chief occaſion of it. We here, the States may be ſure, ſhall not be fond to engage in a new war, who feel the effects of one at preſent in our bowels; let us, therefore, keep to our old maxims, and unite ſtrongly together. The way to avoid a war, is not to be much afraid of one, and to form ſuch an union among the allies, as to let the French ſee, that if they have a mind to fall out with one of us, they will certainly bring all the reſt into the quarrel."

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Chapter 14. 1716.

Vigorous and prudent measures of the British cabinet.

These vigorous measures alarmed the regent; and induced him now to court, with zeal and sincerity, the friendship of England. Stair availed himself of these favourable sentiments, to promote the success of the negotiation. But his address, and the influence which he had gained over the regent, gave umbrage to Torcy, d'Huxelles, and the French ministers who were averse to the treaty; and they had interest sufficient to have the negotiation transferred to the Hague, under the direction of Chateauneuf, the French ambassador, who was hostile to the whole transaction.

Horace Walpole, as minister from England, conducted the business with great ability. He counteracted the intrigues of Chateauneuf, and threw a momentary spirit into the weak and wavering counsels of the Dutch republic. He saw and appreciated the advantages which would result from an alliance with France, in insuring domestic security and foreign tranquillity. He was apprehensive lest the insidious conduct of the regent might so far excite a just, thought imprudent indignation in the king and ministry, as to induce them to reject all overtures of accommodation with France, and laboured incessantly to avert what he justly considered so great an evil *.

In

* "If I may venture to give your lordship my own sentiments upon this matter, it is very naturall to think that France has two views in her present conduct; 1°, if the regent should propose to enter into new engagements with his majesty, and the States, and they should accept of his proposall, and make a treaty with him, he may design by that means to amuse and disarm them, and thereby have a better opportunity to attack either; or 2^do, if the regent's offers of this nature should be rejected, he may hope to take an advantage of such a refusall,

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In a conference with penſionary Heinſius, of which Horace Walpole gives an account in a private letter to Lord Townſhend, he details, in a few words, the advantages which would reſult to the king and nation, from an alliance with France †.

Townſhend had previouſly adopted the ſame ſentiments; and it was in a great meaſure owing to his ſuggeſtions, that the Britiſh cabinet opened a nego-

a refuſall, and to inſinuate, both in England and Holland, that his majeſty has a deſign to keep his forces on foot; and to quarrell with France; by not forgetting what is paſt, nor being willing to come to a better underſtanding with the regent; and if ſuch a notion ſhould once take place, it would have a very ill effect in both countrys; but to diſappoint France in theſe two views, may it not be adviſeable not to talk directly againſt an alliance with France, to prevent further miſchiefs, at leaſt no further than to ſhow how neceſſary it is, after the regent's late conduct, to conclude the defenſive treaty with the Emperour, preferable to any other whatſoever, ſince it cannot be expected that his majeſty ſhould ſeek the friendſhip and confidence of France, after the uſage he has received from her; and if the regent ſhould make any propoſition for an alliance with his majeſty, and the States, it may be ſo far received as to have it leiſurely conſidered, and his majeſty has reaſon and right enough to inſiſt upon ſome certain articles to be made part of that treaty, which, if accepted and executed, may putt us out of all apprehenſions of the Pretender; and if rejected, will expoſe the regent's ill deſigns to all the world. In the mean time, I ſuppoſe, that the defenſive alliance with the Emperour ſhould be promoted as much as poſſible, and a force by ſea and land, ſufficient for our ſecurity, be kept up. For as of one ſide we muſt take care of not being duped by France, we muſt on the other avoyd being thought deſirous of a quarrell, and irreconcileable, even for our own ſecurity, and the preſervation of the peace." Walpole Papers.

† "The preſent ſituation of affairs in England can by no means be agreeable to him. On one hand, it can't be ſafe or prudent for his majeſty to break his troops and diſarm himſelf, untill he has reaſon to believe, that France has abandoned the cauſe of the Pretender; on the other ſide the people of England may grow uneaſy at the burthen and expenſe of a ſtanding army; ſo that it is certainly the intent both of his majeſty and his miniſtry, to have a friendſhip and confidence with France, that by having nothing to apprehend from thence the government may return to its naturall conſtitution of guards and garriſons, and enjoying perfect eaſe and repoſe; and I added, that it is evident, by his majeſty's whole conduct, that he has done all that is poſſible for him to gain the regent's amity and good will."

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a negotiation for a defenſive alliance with France. But the deceitful behaviour of Chateauneuf, and the dilatory proceedings of the Dutch, enforced the neceſſity of more expeditious and deciſive meaſures. Lord Stair dexterouſly counteracted the intrigues of the French miniſters at Paris, by contriving to place the negotiation in the hands of du Bois, who repaired to Hanover, where the buſineſs was carried on by ſecretary Stanhope under the immediate auſpices of the king. The negotiation was conducted with ſuch ſecrecy and diſpatch, that an interval of a few days only elapſed between the arrival of du Bois, and the adjuſtment of the preliminaries *.

Chapter 14. 1716.

Concluſion of the alliance with France.

After a few conferences, du Bois agreed, in the name of the regent, to ſend the Pretender beyond the Alps, and to demoliſh the port of Mardyke †, called by Lord Townſhend, in a letter to Horace Walpole, "that terrible thorn in the ſide of

Auguſt 21.

* Correſpondence, Period II.

† One of the articles in the treaty of Utrecht, expreſsly ſtipulated the demolition of Dunkirk, from which port the trade of England and Holland had been incommoded during the late war. The king of France had literally fulfilled this article; but had, at the ſame time, opened a new canal at Mardyke, which would have been equally prejudicial to the trade of Great Britain. Prior, at that time embaſſador at Paris, was ordered to preſent a memorial, preſſing the performance of the 9th article of the treaty of Utrecht. The king of France declared in expreſs terms, that Mardyke was not Dunkirk, and that the treaty of Utrecht did not deprive him of the natural right of a ſovereign, to conſtruct ſuch works as he ſhould judge moſt proper for the preſervation of his ſubjects. The truth is, that the Engliſh plenipotentiaries had been extremely negligent; in ſtipulating the demolition of Dunkirk, it could not be their intention that another and a better harbour ſhould be made on the ſame coaſt: But that ſtipulation ſhould have been inſerted; and it was natural that all advantages ſhould be taken by the French, on whom ſuch articles were impoſed *,

* Tindal, vol. 18. p. 327. 331.

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" of England," on condition of confirming the article in the treaty of Utrecht, which guarantied the ſucceſſion of the crown of France to the houſe of Orleans, ſhould Louis the Fifteenth die without iſſue.

CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH.

1716.

Situation of Affairs at Home.—Conduct of the Prince of Wales.—Precarious and perplexed Situation of Townſhend and Walpole.—Departure of Sunderland.—Cauſes of the King's Diſpleaſure againſt Townſhend and Walpole.—Their Oppoſition to his continental Politics.—Walpole's Reſiſtance to the Payment of the German Troops.—Intrigues and Arrogance of the Hanoverian Miniſters.—Sunderland arries at Hanover.—Cabals with the German Junto.—Gains Stanhope.—Prevails on the King to diſmiſs Townſhend.

WHILE Townſhend was thus ſucceſsfully employed in reſtoring conſequence and dignity to the Britiſh negotiations abroad, and in ſecuring tranquillity at home; while Walpole was conducting the affairs of finance with wiſdom and ability, and laying a plan to reduce the intereſt of the national debt, an active cabal was undermining the favour of the brother miniſters; advantage was taken of the king's proneneſs to jea-

and according to Lord Stair *, Prior, embaſſador at Paris, ſeemed altogether unknowing as to the affair of Mardyke; to have had no inſtructions while the canal was making; and to have concerned himſelf no farther about it, ſince he delivered the memorials. The earl of Stair proſecuted the affair with greater zeal and vigour; it now became an object of importance, and lord Townſhend obſerves to Horace Walpole, " The article of Mardyke is in truth the chief and moſt eſſential point for the intereſt of England, for which his majeſty has occaſion to deſire this alliance."

July 31ſt.

* Hardwicke's State Papers, vol. 2. p. 528.

louſy;

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louſy; every engine was employed againſt them at Hanover; and after a ſhort, but manly ſtruggle, Townſhend was diſmiſſed, and Walpole reſigned his employment. Chapter 15. 1716.

This change in the adminiſtration, was derived from the miſunderſtanding between the king and the prince of Wales; the oppoſition of the cabinet to ſome of the plans of continental politics propoſed at Hanover; the intrigues and arrogance of the Hanoverian junto; and the cabals of Sunderland and Stanhope. Cauſes of the change in adminiſtration.

On the king's departure, the prince of Wales had aſſumed the internal adminiſtration of affairs, and ſuch part of foreign tranſactions as could not be carried on at Hanover. The rebellion having been ſuppreſſed, and tranquillity reſtored, the people became gradually more and more ſatisfied with the new government. The king's enemies imputed this ſatisfaction, which was the natural conſequence of events, to the good conduct of the prince, and likewiſe affected to ſpread abroad, that many acts of grace, the opening of the communication from Dover to Calais, and the diſpenſing with paſſports, were owing to the ſame cauſe. Reports of his affability and condeſcenſion to all perſons, without diſtinction of parties, were circulated, with a miſchievous intention to decry the coldneſs and reſerve of the king; and his partial acquaintance with the Engliſh tongue, was magnified, and repreſented as a proof of his earneſt deſire to accommodate himſelf to the cuſtoms of the nation. He increaſed his popularity by a ſhort Conduct of the prince of Wales.

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Period II. 1714 to 1720.

short progress into Kent, Sussex, and Hampshire, and addresses were preparing in several places, extolling his wisdom in the administration of affairs, and the graciousness of his manners *. These, and other circumstances, together with the extreme popularity † of the princess of Wales, were not concealed from the king, and could not fail to augment the disgust he had already entertained against his son. The prince still farther offended the king, by shewing particular attention to the duke of Argyle; by his reserve to the ministers in England, and by the court which he paid to the Tories.

While the ministers were thus exposed to the resentment of the prince, for their superior attachment to his father, rumours were circulated that their favour was declining with the king. In several letters to Stanhope, Walpole bitterly complains of their irksome situation; and, in the extremity of his chagrin, compares himself and his colleagues, to galley slaves, chained to the oar ‡. In this uneasy situation, they judged it necessary for the king's service, to remove the prejudices, and to acquire the confidence of the prince, which their prudence and address had no sooner effected, by destroying the credit of Argyle, than they awakened the suspicions of the king, who was feelingly alive to sentiments of jealousy towards his son.

* Tindal, vol. 19. p. 33. 38.

† Political State of Great Britain, vol. 12. p. 140.

‡ See Correspondence, Period II.

Another

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Another cauſe of the king's diſpleaſure was, the oppoſition of the cabinet to the continental politics, and their unwillingneſs to plunge the country into a war with Ruſſia. A diſpute had ariſen between the duke and nobles of Mecklenburgh, in which the duke was ſupported by Peter the Great; the nobles by the Emperor, the king of Pruſſia, and George the Firſt, as elector of Hanover. George was influenced by Bernſdorf, who, being a noble of that duchy, was irritated againſt the Czar. Though theſe potentates embraced contrary ſides, their views were the ſame, the poſſeſſion of the duke's territories.

Chapter 15. 1716.

Oppoſition to continental politics.

Thoſe who indiſcriminately cenſure the conduct of Walpole, have not ſcrupled to aſſert, that he embarked in every ſcheme of aggrandizement which intereſt or ambition might ſuggeſt to the ſovereign: on the contrary, in this affair, he and Townſhend diſplayed that manly reſiſtance which does honour to their character, and refutes ſuch groundleſs accuſation. In the courſe of this quarrel, Bernſdorf propoſed to Stanhope the wild and daring project of ſeizing the ſhips, diſarming the forces of the Czar, by means of the Danes, and arreſting and detaining his perſon until his troops ſhould evacuate Denmark and Germany. Townſhend reprobated, in the ſtrongeſt terms, this violent propoſal; repreſented that the proſecution of the war in the north, would be the ruin of England, declared that parliament could not be induced to ſanction ſuch a profuſion of the public money, for purpoſes foreign to her

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real intereſts; recommended a peace with Sweden, and ſtrongly urged the neceſſity of obtaining that bleſſing by ſome equivalent reſtitutions. The freedom of remonſtrance uſed on this occaſion, incenſed the king, who declared that he conſidered his deareſt intereſts ſacrificed to the parſimony of the Engliſh miniſtry. His reſentment was ſtill farther inflamed againſt Walpole, by his declaration of the impracticability of replacing the money advanced for the pay of the troops of Munſter and Saxe Gotha, till the receipt of the ſums appropriated by parliament to that uſe. The anger of the king roſe ſo high, that Walpole was reproached with having broken his promiſe; the miniſter vindicated himſelf with becoming ſpirit, and declared, that though he could not venture to contradict the king's aſſertion, yet, that if he had ever made ſuch a promiſe, it had eſcaped his memory.

Influence of the Germans.

The rapacity and ambition of the German favourites had received ſeveral checks from the ſpirit and inflexibility of Townſhend and Walpole; they had hoped to appropriate to themſelves large ſums from the grant of the French lands in the iſland of St. Chriſtopher, ceded at the peace, and the ducheſs of Munſter had engaged for a ſum of money to procure a peerage for Sir Richard Child, a violent Tory. Both theſe meaſures were counteracted, to the great mortification of the whole junto. The haughty and intereſted miſtreſs, accuſtomed to domineer over the miniſters of the electorate, could ill brook to be thwarted by the

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Engliſh cabinet. Robethon diſplayed his reſentment by the moſt inſolent demands, and petulant reproofs *.

Although the earl of Sunderland, ſoon after his arrival at Gohre, ſecured the powerful aid of the Hanoverian junto, by the promiſe of obtaining a repeal of the diſqualifying clauſe in the act of ſettlement, yet his intrigues had no other chance of being attended with ſucceſs, unleſs he could gain ſecretary Stanhope, who owed his appointment ſolely to the influence of Townſhend, and the friendſhip of the Walpoles, and poſſeſſed their implicit confidence. As Townſhend himſelf, on account of his wife's pregnancy, declined going to Hanover, his colleague was entruſted with that important ſervice; he was to keep the king ſteady to his miniſters in England, and to watch and baffle the intrigues which might be formed to remove them. Stanhope appeared peculiarly qualified for this taſk. A long and intimate connection with Walpole, had bound them in the ſtricteſt ties of friendſhip, and when Walpole recommended him to Townſhend, he anſwered for his integrity, as for his own. Stanhope himſelf had made no application for the office of ſecretary. His frequent reſidence in camps, and ſkill in the profeſſion of arms, rendered him, in his own opinion, more fit for a military than a civil ſtation; and when Walpole propoſed it, he conſidered the offer as a matter of raillery, and applied his hand to his

Arrival and intrigues of Sunderland, at Hanover.

October 22.

Gains Stanhope.

* See Correſpondence, Period II. paſſim. Political State of Great Britain, vol. 12. p. 477.

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Period II. 1714 to 1720.

ſword *. It was not till after much perſuaſion, and the moſt ſolemn aſſurances, that his compliance would materially contribute to the ſecurity of the new adminiſtration, that he was induced to accept the poſt.

One of the principal charges which Stanhope had received from his friends in England, was to be on his guard againſt the intrigues of Sunderland; who had, under pretence of ill health, obtained the king's permiſſion to go to Aix-la-Chapelle. At the time of his departure, he had given the moſt poſitive aſſurances of repentance and concern, for his late endeavours to remove his colleagues, and after the moſt ſolemn profeſſions of friendſhip and union, had condeſcended to aſk their advice for the regulation of his conduct at Hanover, to which place he intended to apply for leave to proceed. Townſhend and Walpole ſuſpected his ſincerity; they had experienced his abilities; they knew his ambition, and they dreaded the aſcendancy which he might obtain, through the channel of the Hanoverians, over the king. But they implicitly truſted in the ſagacity and integrity of Stanhope, either to prevent his appearance at Hanover, or, if he came, to counteract his views. Stanhope, however, did not follow their directions, for when Sunderland demanded acceſs to the king, inſtead of oppoſing, he promoted the requeſt with all his influence †.

* From Lord Orford.

† See Correſpondence.—September 8th. Period II.

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The mode of correſpondence adopted, during his continuance at Hanover, ſufficiently proved the unbounded confidence placed in Stanhope. Walpole wrote in his own hand, occaſional letters of the moſt private nature, in which he repreſented the internal ſtate of affairs, the behaviour of the prince, the ſentiments of individuals, and the conduct of Bothmar and other perſons who were caballing againſt them. In addition to this mode of communication, Stephen Poyntz, the confidential ſecretary of lord Townſhend, was appointed a ſupernumerary clerk in the ſecretary of ſtate's office. His principal employment was to lay before Stanhope ſuch occurrences and obſervations as Townſhend and Methuen, who acted as ſecretary of ſtate during the abſence of Stanhope, thought improper to be inſerted in their public diſpatches. He was never to write but through the channel of a meſſenger, and Stanhope was requeſted to communicate theſe letters only to the king, under the ſtrongeſt injunctions of ſecrecy, or to withhold them at diſcretion. With the ſame precautions, and by the ſame conveyance, Stanhope was to ſend, under cover to Poyntz, ſuch particulars as the king might judge improper and inconvenient to be laid before the prince, or the cabinet council *.

In this confidential correſpondence, Townſhend and Walpole ſtated freely their objections to the continental politics, declared their diſſatisfaction at

* Poyntz to ſecretary Stanhope, 1716. Correſpondence, Period II.

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the interference of the Hanoverians, and their contempt at their venal and intereſted conduct. They thus put it in his power to betray their private ſentiments, and to increaſe the averſion of the Hanoverian junto. The ſeduction therefore of Stanhope from his former friends, was a maſterpiece of art, as the defection of the perſon in whom they placed the moſt implicit confidence, rendered every attempt to baffle the efforts of Sunderland ineffectual, becauſe the mine was not diſcovered until it was ſprung.

At what preciſe period, or by what inducement Stanhope was gained by Sunderland, cannot be poſitively aſcertained; but from the general diſintereſtedneſs of his character, I am led to conclude, that he did not lightly betray his friends, or yield to the ſuggeſtions of Sunderland from venal or ambitious motives. The private information I have received, and the letters which paſſed between Stanhope and Walpole, ſeem to prove, that Sunderland had convinced him, that the Engliſh cabinet were ſecretly counteracting the concluſion of the alliance with France, that their oppoſition to the northern tranſactions was a dereliction of the principles on which the revolution was founded; and he was made to believe that his friend Walpole had broke his word with the king in the affair of the Munſter and Saxe Gotha troops.

This coolneſs of Stanhope towards the two miniſters was ſtill further augmented by the tranſactions in Holland, and the conduct of Horace Walpole, whoſe frank and open character ſcorned to diſguiſe

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guiſe his ſentiments, and refuſed to follow orders which he conſidered as repugnant to honour and plain dealing. He had cenſured the proceedings at Hanover, in regard to the politics of the north, in terms ſtill ſtronger than thoſe uſed by Townſhend. He lamented that the whole ſyſtem of affairs in Europe, ſhould be entirely ſubverted on account of Mecklenburgh. To Horace Walpole had been intruſted the ſecret negotiation of the defenſive treaty with France, and while it was carrying on, the ſtricteſt ſecrecy was enjoined. Afterwards it was thought prudent to remove the negotiation to Hanover, where, as has been already obſerved, it was conducted by ſecretary Stanhope himſelf, and du Bois, and the proceedings communicated to Horace Walpole. During its progreſs he had ſolemnly aſſured the penſionary and greffier, that no treaty would be concluded ſeparately from the Dutch; but the urgency of affairs, and the king's impatience to ſettle the preliminaries before the regent of France could avail himſelf of the diſſentions with Ruſſia to ſupport the Czar in the affair of Mecklenburgh, rendered it impolitic to wait for the dilatory proceedings of the Dutch republic, and full powers were therefore forwarded to him and lord Cadogan, as joint plenipotentiaries at the Hague, to ſign the treaty with du Bois, without farther delay. On the receipt of theſe orders, Horace Walpole earneſtly exhorted Sunderland and Stanhope at Hanover, to intercede with the king to diſpenſe with his ſigning the treaty, and requeſted lord Townſhend to obtain permiſ-

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ſion of the prince of Wales for his return to England, under pretence of ill health. He declared, in the moſt poſitive and unequivocal manner, that no conſideration on earth ſhould induce him to comply; that he would relinquiſh all preſent and future advantages, and lay his life at the king's feet, rather than be guilty of ſo nefarious an action. Theſe repeated remonſtrances had their effect, and permiſſion was at length granted from Hanover, that he might depart, and leave to Cadogan the ſignature of the treaty.

During his reſidence at Gohre, Sunderland received many marks of favour, and by his conſummate addreſs ſoon acquired the full confidence of the king. He found it no difficult matter to ſelect, from the numerous tranſactions in which Townſhend had been employed, ſome apparent inſtances of diſreſpect, or of neglect in his department. But it is remarkable, that notwithſtanding the known zeal of Townſhend for the French treaty, that although he was the original adviſer and promoter of it, and had gradually ſurmounted the indifference of the king*, the oppoſition of Sunderland, the diſapprobation of Stanhope, and the objections of the Hanoverian miniſters, yet it was now alledged as a crime againſt him, that he had purpoſely delayed its ſignature. This extraordinary imputation was conveyed to him in letters from the king, Stanhope, and Sunderland. The letter from the king is miſſing, but

* Lord Townſhend's letter to the king.

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that of Sunderland * will give a ſtriking proof of the influence he had already gained over his maſter, and the imperiouſneſs of his character, when he delivered his cenſures in ſo harſh and authoritative a manner to the prime miniſter in England. Chapter 15. 1716.

While the anſwer to the charge was expected at Hanover, Sunderland urged another ſubject of complaint, which made a ſtill greater impreſſion on the king, and contributed to the ſucceſs of his intrigues. He availed himſelf, with great addreſs, of the miſunderſtanding with the prince of Wales. He inſinuated to the king, that Townſhend and Walpole were caballing with the duke of Argyle and the earl of Ilay; that their repeated remonſtrances to draw him from Hanover, were only ſo many feints to cover their own inſidious deſigns; that their great object was to detain him abroad; and by urging the neceſſity of tranſacting the public buſineſs, to induce him to inveſt the prince of Wales with fuller powers, and enable him to open the parliament, and to obtain an increaſed, permanent, and independent intereſt. The effect of theſe repreſentations was aided by the anxious ſolicitude which the prince diſcovered, on all occaſions, to open the parliament in perſon, and by his imprudence in preſſing Stanhope, by means of a letter from Townſhend, to obtain a ſpeedy anſwer, announcing the king's definitive reſolutions †.

Theſe inſinuations, ſeconded by the Hanoverian miſtreſſes and miniſters, having made a deep im-

* Correſpondence, Period II. November 11.

† Correſpondence.

preſſion,

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preſſion, Sunderland adviſed the king to demand of the cabinet council, the heads of the buſineſs to be brought forward in the next ſeſſion; and to declare that he was deſirous of paſſing the winter at Hanover, if any expedient could be adopted for ſummoning the parliament, and tranſacting affairs. This demand being forwarded to the miniſter, the council inſtantly deliberated on the meſſage, and Townſhend, anxious to gratify the inclination of the king, tranſmitted a favourable anſwer, by his confidential friend and brother-in-law Horace Walpole, who had juſt arrived from the Hague. He was ſo anxious to convey this diſpatch with all poſſible ſpeed, that he quitted London on the 13th of November, the evening of its ſignature, left the Hague on the 17th, and, travelling night and day, arrived at Gohre on the 22d. He flattered himſelf with a favourable reception, as the meſſenger of good tidings, but found the ſtate of affairs far different from that which his ſanguine expectations had ſuggeſted.

He found the king devoted to Sunderland, and exaſperated againſt his brother and Townſhend, to whom the letters on the delay in ſigning the French treaty, expreſſive of high indignation, had juſt been forwarded. He found him ſtill greatly diſſatisfied with their oppoſition to the plan of northern politics, diſguſted with the backwardneſs of Walpole to advance the ſubſidies for his troops of Saxe Gotha and Munſter, and ſo ſtrongly impreſſed with the danger of permitting the prince of Wales to open the parliament in perſon, as to declare that no

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no conſideration ſhould induce him to conſent to the grant of diſcretionary powers for that purpoſe. He found Stanhope diſpleaſed with the conduct of Townſhend, and convinced that his negotiations for the peace with France, and for the operations in the north, were counteracted by the Engliſh cabinet.

The frankneſs and warmth of his temper, impelled him without diſguiſe to ſpeak plain truths, and to expoſtulate with a manly freedom and dignified ſpirit which aſtounded Sunderland, and diſconcerted Stanhope. He reminded Stanhope in particular, that he owed his high ſituation to Townſhend and his brother; he remonſtrated with him for having concurred with their enemies, and affirmed that the ſuſpicions he had entertained againſt Townſhend were totally groundleſs. He candidly avowed, that if blame was incurred by any delay in ſigning the treaty with France, that blame muſt attach ſolely to him, whoſe delicacy prevented him from affixing his name to an act, after he had ſolemnly aſſured the leading men in Holland, that England would not conclude a ſeparate treaty. He finally anſwered for the honour and friendſhip of the brother miniſters in England.

Stanhope, affected with theſe remonſtrances, ſo forcibly urged by his friend, acknowledged that he had been deceived by falſe ſuggeſtions; ſpoke of Townſhend and Walpole in terms of praiſe and affection; expreſſed a high ſenſe of his obligations to them; requeſted that what was paſt might be forgotten,

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forgotten, and what was to come might be improved; and promiſed in the moſt ſolemn manner to uſe his influence with the king, which he repreſented as very conſiderable, in favour of thoſe who had committed to him his preſent truſt. Horace Walpole was fully ſatisfied with theſe declarations. Stanhope ſeemed to act in conformity with his promiſes, and to labour to efface the ill impreſſions which the king had entertained of his miniſters in England. Sunderland appeared confounded; the Hanoverians abaſhed; and the king inclined to recover his former ſatisfaction and complacency.

While theſe favourable ſymptoms of returning good will and harmony apparently prevailed, the anſwer of Townſhend to the charges of delaying the ſignature to the French treaty, arrived at Gohre. To Sunderland's inſolent reproofs he did not condeſcend to make any reply; to Stanhope he wrote only a few lines, teſtifying his concern and indignation at being betrayed by one in whom he placed the moſt implicit confidence; but his anſwer to the king*, contained a full and dignified refutation of the malicious calumnies and miſrepreſentations of his enemies; and was written in a ſtyle and manner, expreſſing without diſguiſe the high opinion which he entertained of his own character.

Townſhend juſtifies himſelf.

This manly and ſpirited letter appeared to have its due effect. The king, convinced that he had haſtily and unjuſtly accuſed lord Townſhend, candidly acknowledged his miſtake. Stanhope, highly

* November 11. See Correſpondence, Period II.

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affected with a letter from his friend Walpole, juſtifying himſelf and Townſhend from the malicious imputations laid to their charge, renewed his proteſtations of gratitude and devotion, and requeſted the interference of Horace Walpole to bring about a thorough reconciliation, and to re-eſtabliſh the former harmony and good underſtanding. The king commiſſioned him to convey the ſtrongeſt aſſurances of reſtored confidence in his faithful counſellors in England; and Horace Walpole quitted Gohre with a full conviction that all reſentment had totally ſubſided, and that Stanhope was ſincere; and he was as anxious to return to England with the good tidings, as he had been eager to repair to Hanover with the letter from the cabinet council. Chapter 15. 1716.

His journey being ſomewhat retarded by unforeſeen accidents on the road, and by the difficulty of croſſing Maeſland Sluys, he did not arrive in London till the 11th of December. He inſtantly executed his commiſſion; delivered to Townſhend and his brother Stanhope's letters, containing the ſtrongeſt aſſurances of devotion and friendſhip; announced the king's favourable declarations; reconciled all parties, and re-eſtabliſhed, as he thought, the moſt perfect harmony and good underſtanding in the cabinet. But he had ſcarcely effected this happy reconciliation, before diſpatches were brought from Stanhope, announcing the king's command to remove Townſhend from the office of ſecretary of ſtate, and to offer him the lord lieutenancy of Ireland. As Brereton, who conveyed Removal of Townſhend.

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conveyed theſe diſpatches without being appriſed of their contents, could not have quitted Gohre more than three days ſubſequent to the departure of Horace Walpole, it was obvious that he had been duped and deceived, that the plan for the removal of Townſhend had been then ſettled; and that the ſolemn promiſes, made by Stanhope, were never intended to be fulfilled. A letter from Sunderland to one of his friends, of the ſame date with thoſe that brought the diſmiſſion of Townſhend, fully proved the motives which influenced the king to countenance this proceeding. It accuſed Townſhend, Walpole, and the chancellor, of caballing with the prince of Wales and Argyle, and forming deſigns againſt the king's authority *. In fact, the letter from the cabinet council, which Horace Walpole had conveyed to Gohre, was the death warrant of Townſhend's adminiſtration. It contained many expreſſions and opinions highly unfavourable to the ſentiments and inclinations of the king, and wholly oppoſite to the views of the Hanoverian junto. By the demand, that full and diſcretionary powers ſhould be ſent to the prince of Wales, it confirmed the opinion ſuggeſted by lord Sunderland, that the object of the miniſters in England, was to exalt the ſon above the father, and to ſhew that the buſineſs of parliament could be tranſacted by the prince of Wales. It irritated the king to ſuch a degree, that the immediate removal of the miniſter would have been the inevi-

* See Townſhend's letter to Slingelandt, January, $\frac{1}{12}$, 1717. Correſpondence.

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table consequence, had not the presence of Horace Walpole, and his expostulations with Stanhope, disconcerted, for a short time, the plans of Sunderland. But the favourable impressions which his representations and the manly reply of Townshend had effected, were soon worn off by the suggestions of the Hanoverian junto; the king's jealousy again returned with redoubled force, and Townshend was dismissed. Chapter 15. 1716.

Townshend received the unexpected account of his dismission with no less surprise than indignation. In his letter to the king, he announced his resolution to decline the offer of the lord lieutenancy, with great dignity and spirit. Townshend declines the lord lieutenancy, Dec. 11.

" * I have received with deference, and with the utmost submission, your majesty's commands, intimated by M. secretary Methuen, depriving me of the office of secretary of state. I most humbly demand permission to remind your majesty of what I said, when you did me the honour to confer on me that employment; that I should esteem myself happy, if I had as much capacity as zeal and affection for your majesty's service, in which case I am sure that your majesty would have every reason to be satisfied with my services. I can venture to affirm with truth, that the desire of testifying my gratitude has been the only motive capable of hitherto supporting me under the fatigues of my employment. I am highly sensible of the honour which your majesty confers on me, by condescend- His letter to the king.

* Townshend Papers.—See the French letter, of which this is the original draught, in the Correspondence.

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ing to appoint me lord lieutenant of Ireland: But as my domeſtic affairs do not permit me to reſide out of England, I ſhould hold myſelf to be totally unworthy of the choice which your majeſty has been pleaſed to make, if I were capable of enjoying the large appointments annexed to that honourable office, without doing the duty of it. I truſt that your majeſty will grant me the permiſſion to attend to the private affairs of my family, which I have too much neglected. Yet I will venture to aſſure your majeſty, that whatever may be my ſituation, your majeſty will always find me a faithful and grateful ſervant, anxious to promote, with all his power, your majeſty's ſervice; having the honour of being, with the moſt inviolable attachment, ſire, your majeſty's moſt humble, moſt obedient, and moſt faithful ſubject and ſervant."

In a ſhort letter to Stanhope, Townſhend calmly reproached him for the duplicity of his conduct, and particularly dwelt on the violation of his promiſes to Horace Walpole. But Stanhope had to encounter the ſtill ſeverer reproaches from his confidential friend, Walpole. To him he opened himſelf in a private letter, which was delivered twenty-four hours before that which announced the diſmiſſion of Townſhend. In this apology he was extremely anxious to juſtify his conduct, and to attribute his acquieſcence to the poſitive commands of the king, who bitterly complained of the warmth and impracticability of Townſhend's temper and manners, and he imputed ſolely to his own influence, that the diſgrace of the miniſter was ſoftened by

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by the offer of the lord lieutenancy. He took merit to himſelf for having removed the prejudices which the king had entertained againſt Walpole, and earneſtly exhorted him to employ his intereſt with lord Townſhend to accept the proffered dignity. The reader will find, in the correſpondence, this ſpecious juſtification of his conduct, and the reproachful anſwers of Walpole, who after complaining of the hardſhip with which Townſhend was treated, obſerved, that it was ſtill more unjuſt to load him with falſe imputations to juſtify ſuch ill treatment, and concluded with expreſſing his reſolution to act invariably with him.

Walpole reproaches Stanhope.

CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH.

1716—1717.

Diſcontents in England and Holland at the Diſgrace of Townſhend.—Sunderland and Stanhope, and the Hanoverians, are alarmed.—Apologize for their Conduct.—The King prevails upon him to accept the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland.—Motives for his Conduct.—Townſhend and Walpole coldly ſupport Government.—Sunderland increaſes his Party.—Townſhend diſmiſſed from the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland.—Walpole propoſes and carries his Scheme for reducing the Intereſt of the National Debt.—Reſigns.—Many of the leading Whigs follow his Example.—Weakneſs of the new Adminiſtration.

THE precipitate manner in which Townſhend was removed from the office of ſecretary of ſtate, was occaſioned by a violent burſt of reſentment and jealouſy in the king. But as ſoon as the firſt emotions of anger had ſubſided, and the firſt raptures

Alarms on diſmiſſion of Townſhend.

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Period II. 1714 to 1720.

of triumph among thoſe who had obtained his diſgrace had given way to ſober and ſerious reflection, the whole body began to be alarmed at the fatal conſequences which ſeemed likely to enſue from that event.

In England.

Reports were tranſmitted from England, that theſe meaſures had excited very ſerious diſcontents and miſtruſts amongſt the monied men in the city; that the greater part of the Whigs were highly exaſperated; that of the cabinet council, Devonſhire, Orford, Cowper, Walpole, and Methuen adhered inviolably to the fallen miniſter, and that their ſeceſſion might create a dangerous diviſion, and diſtract the plans already concerted for the enſuing ſeſſion. But above all conſiderations they dreaded the oppoſition of Walpole, who took a principal lead in the houſe of commons; and whoſe ability for the affairs of finance was ſo well underſtood, as to render it difficult to ſupply his place at the head of the treaſury at this particular juncture, when he was forming a ſcheme, which had been highly applauded by the king, for reducing the intereſt of the national debt.

In Holland.

Theſe apprehenſions were not confined to England, but extended to foreign parts, and particularly Holland. Many calumnious imputations having been inſinuated by Sunderland and the Hanoverians, Townſhend wrote a full and ſpirited juſtification of his and Walpole's conduct, and detailed the real motives which had occaſioned their diſgrace, in a letter * to his

* Correſpondence.

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confidential friend, Slingelandt, afterwards penſionary of Holland; who ſtrongly expreſſed regret at his diſmiſſion, and concern at his refuſal to accept the lord lieutenancy of Ireland. Chapter 15. 1716 to 1717.

This letter had a very ſtriking effect upon his friends in Holland. Penſionary Heinſius, Fagel, Slingelandt, Duvenvoirde, and other leading men in that republic, expreſſed the moſt ſerious concern at the fatal conſequences which might reſult to the united intereſts of the two countries from this fatal diviſion; and reprobated a meaſure, which, according to their opinion, was calculated to make the crown totter on the head of the king. The opinion of theſe men, warmly attached to the Engliſh intereſt, had great weight with George the Firſt, during the ſhort time which he paſſed at the Hague, on his return to England.

Apprehenſions of Sunderland and Stanhope.

The terror of Sunderland and Stanhope on this occaſion, is fully proved by the extraordinary attention they now paid to Townſhend and Walpole. Sunderland apologized for having accuſed them of caballing with the duke of Argyle; and acknowledged that the report had originated from a miſrepreſentation of Lord Cadogan, whoſe haſty temper was well known. He expreſſed his regret and repentance for having written an inſolent letter * to the earl of Orford, in which he had inſulted the cabinet miniſters who adhered to Townſhend. Both he and Stanhope vied in

* See letter from M. Duvenvoirde to Lord Townſhend.—Correſpondence.

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making the moſt artful excuſes for their paſt conduct; declared that they did not in the ſmalleſt degree contribute to his diſgrace, and threw the whole blame on the Hanoverians. They finally expatiated on the danger to the true Whig intereſt, if Townſhend now deſerted his tried friends. Stanhope wrote in the ſtrongeſt manner to Walpole, and uſed every argument to appeaſe his reſentment. He renewed his aſſeverations, that the removal of the miniſter was the ſole determination of his royal maſter, pronounced it an impoſſible attempt to think of perſuading the king to recall his commands; expreſſed his apprehenſions of the dangerous conſequences, if Walpole and the other leaders of the Whigs ſhould deem it neceſſary to reſign; and repeated his earneſt entreaties to prevent things from being carried to ſuch extremities as he dreaded to think of. He exhorted Methuen, who declared his reſolution of acting with Walpole, not to deſert the good cauſe; and throw the king into the hands of the Tories; but ſolicited his humble interpoſition with Townſhend and Walpole: "They may poſſibly" he added, "unking their maſter, or (what I do before God think very poſſible) make him abdicate; but they will never force him to make Townſhend ſecrerary *." On their arrival in England, they acted in the ſame abject manner, and continued to make the moſt humble ſubmiſſion.

* Letter from Stanhope to Methuen.—Correſpondence.

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Conduct of the king. 1717.

The king himſelf treated Townſhend with the moſt flattering marks of diſtinction. He apologized in perſon for the precipitation with which he had deprived him of the ſeals, and acknowledged that he had been impoſed upon by falſe reports; he ſent Bernſdorf to repreſent the fatal effects which would be derived from his oppoſition at this period. That artful miniſter offered him, in his maſter's name, a reſtoration to his former favour, and every ſatisfaction which he could deſire; declared that the king having taken from him the ſeals, could not immediately reſtore them conſiſtently with his own honour; promiſed that no other changes ſhould be made; intreated him to accept the proffered dignity. He aſſured him that he might conſider that office only as a temporary poſt, and be permitted to reſign it at pleaſure, in exchange for any other he ſhould prefer *.

Townſhend accepts the lord lieutenancy.

As it was impoſſible, after the inſolent letters of Sunderland, and the inſidious conduct of Stanhope, that he could ever repoſe any confidence in thoſe who had thus inſulted and deceived him, he would have acted a nobler and a wiſer part, had he declined accepting any office. Had he perſiſted in his refuſal of the lord lieutenancy, had Walpole, Devonſhire, Orford, Cowper, Methuen, and Pulteney, inſtantly reſigned on his dimiſſion, the party of Sunderland was ſo weak and inſufficient, that he could not have obtained a majority

* Duvenvoirde to Lord Townſhend.—Correſpondence.

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Period II. 1714 to 1720.

in parliament. But Townſhend, mollified by the ſolicitations of the king, overcome by the importunities of his friends in Holland, and dreading the conſequences of a diſunion of the Whigs at this moment, when an invaſion from Sweden was threatened, at length accepted the vice-royalty, and remaining in England, aſſiſted at the deliberations of the cabinet. All the friends of Townſhend were ſuffered to continue in their places. Methuen, who had acted as ſecretary of ſtate during the abſence of Stanhope, now ſucceeded to the ſouthern department. Walpole remained at the head of the treaſury; and the great body of the Whigs ſtill appeared to act with union and cordiality.

Proceedings in parliament.

In conſequence of this apparent amity, the oppoſition in the commons was ſo trifling, that the addreſs, thanking the king for laying before the houſe the paper proving the projected invaſion from Sweden, paſſed unanimouſly *; and when the eſtimates relating to the land forces were preſented, the motion for putting off the conſideration, was carried by a triumphant majority of 222 voices againſt 57 †.

Feb. 21.

March 4.

Freſh diviſions.

But the good underſtanding between the different members of adminiſtration, did not long continue. It ſoon appeared, that the king's promiſes of favour, made by Bernſdorf to Townſhend and Walpole, were not fulfilled; and that he placed his chief confidence in Sunderland and

* Journals.—Chandler. † Chandler.

Stan-

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Stanhope. New diviſions took place; Townſhend and Walpole continued to defend the meaſures of government, but their ſupport was cold and formal, and ſo different from their former zeal, as plainly ſhewed extreme diſſatisfaction. Sunderland had now conſiderably increaſed his party, and thought himſelf ſufficiently ſtrong to carry on the public buſineſs, and defy the oppoſition. In this ſituation, an open rupture in the cabinet was unavoidable. The firſt public ſymptoms of this difference appeared in the houſe of commons. On a motion that a ſupply be granted to enable the king to concert ſuch meaſures with foreign princes and ſtates, as may prevent any apprehenſions from the deſigns of Sweden for the future: Walpole, who on all ſuch occaſions uſed to give a great bias to the houſe, maintained a profound ſilence, and the reſolution was carried by a majority of only 4 voices *. Chapter 16. 1716 to 1717. March 9th.

As it was evident that this mode of inimical proceeding originated from the party of which Townſhend was leader, he received, on the ſame evening, a letter from Stanhope, announcing his diſmiſſion. Townſhend's diſmiſſion.

The king himſelf ſo highly appreciated the ſervices and talents of Walpole, that he dreaded his reſignation, and was perſuaded to remove Townſhend, under the belief that he would ſtill remain at the head of the treaſury. When Walpole, therefore, on the following morning, requeſted an Walpole reſigns.

* Journals.

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audience, and gave up the ſeals, the king was extremely ſurpriſed. He refuſed to accept his reſignation, expreſſed a high ſenſe of his ſervices in the kindeſt and ſtrongeſt terms; declared that he had no thoughts of parting with ſo faithful a counſellor; intreated him not to retire, and replaced the ſeals in his hat. To this Walpole replied, with no leſs concern than firmneſs, that however well inclined he might be to obey his majeſty's commands, yet it would be impoſſible to ſerve him faithfully with thoſe miniſters to whom he had lately given his favour, "They will propoſe to me," he ſaid, "both as chancellor of the exchequer, and in parliament, ſuch things, that if I agree to ſupport them, my credit and reputation will be loſt; and if I diſapprove or oppoſe them, I muſt forfeit your majeſty's favour. For I, in my ſtation, though not the author, muſt be anſwerable to my king and to my country for all the meaſures which may be adopted by adminiſtration." At the concluſion of theſe words, he again laid the ſeals upon the table; the king returned them not leſs than ten times, and when the miniſter as often replaced them on the table, he gave up the ſtruggle, and reluctantly accepted his reſignation, expreſſing great concern and much reſentment at his determined perſeverance. At the concluſion of this affecting ſcene, Walpole came into the adjoining apartment, and thoſe who were preſent, witneſſed the anguiſh of his countenance, and obſerved that his eyes were ſuffuſed with tears.

§ Thoſe

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Thoſe who immediately entered into the cloſet, found the king no leſs diſturbed and agitated *. Chapter 16. 1716 to 1717.

Theſe removals were ſoon followed by an almoſt total change in the adminiſtration. Devonſhire, Orford, Methuen, and Pulteney, reſigned; Stanhope was appointed firſt lord of the treaſury, and chancellor of the exchequer; Sunderland and Addiſon ſecretaries of ſtate; the duke of Bolton lord lieutenant of Ireland, and the duke of Newcaſtle lord chamberlain; the earl of Berkley firſt lord of the admiralty, and the duke of Kingſton retained the office of privy ſeal, to which he had been nominated in the preceding year, on the reſignation of Sunderland, who was made treaſurer of Ireland for life. Further changes.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH:

1717—1719.

Walpole propoſes his Plan for reducing the Intereſt of the National Debt.—His Reſignation excites warm Debates.—Altercation with Stanhope.—Remarks on the baneful Spirit of a ſyſtematic Oppoſition to all the Meaſures of Government.—Walpole not exempted from that Cenſure.—His uniform Oppoſition, and Influence in the Houſe of Commons.

THE reſignation of Walpole happened at a time when he was exerting his abilities for finance, in the arrangement of a ſcheme highly advantageous to the country. When he was firſt placed at the head of the treaſury, the national debt Walpole's ſcheme for reducing the national debt.

* This intereſting anecdote is taken from a letter of Horace Walpole to Etough, dated Wolterton, October 12, 1751. See Correſpondence.

amounted

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Period II. 1714 to 1720.

amounted to 50 millions, and although the common intereſt of money had been reduced in the late reign to 5 per cent. yet the intereſt of ſome of the debts was as high as 8, and none lower than 6; ſo that the average was 7 per cent. The difference between this rate of intereſt, and that on private mortgages, preſented a *real* fund for leſſening the public debt.

This debt was conſidered under two heads; redeemable, and irredeemable. The redeemable, or ſuch debts as had been provided for by parliament with a redeemable intereſt of ſo much per cent. the public had a right and power to diſcharge whenever they were able, either by providing money for ſuch proprietors as inſiſted upon money, or by offering new terms, in diſcharge of all former conditions, which, if accepted by the proprietors, was to be deemed an actual redemption of the firſt debt, as if it had been paid off in ready money. As for the irredeemable debts, or long and ſhort annuities, nothing could be effected without the abſolute conſent of the proprietors. The only method, therefore, to treat with them, was to offer ſuch conditions as they ſhould deem advantageous*.

Upon theſe principles Walpole gave the firſt hint of this great ſcheme, by propoſing to borrow £. 600,000, bearing intereſt only 4 per cent. and to apply all ſavings, ariſing from the intended redemptions, for the purpoſe of reducing and diſcharging the national debt, which was the firſt re-

* Tindal, vol. 19. p. 102.

ſolution

Chapter 17. 1717 to 1719.

solution ever taken in parliament in order to raise or establish a *general* sinking fund *. When he brought his scheme into the house, the project appeared so well digested and advantageous, that the opposition which had been intended was converted into approbation, and every article was agreed to.

March 23, 1717.

April 10th.

Unfortunately for the completion of this great arrangement, the able projector was no longer in office. On bringing in the bill, Walpole gave a hint that he had resigned his places, by saying, "that he now presented it as a country gentleman, but hoped that it would not fare the worse for having two fathers, and that his successor would take care to bring it to perfection †." The difficulties which he had to encounter in this scheme, will appear from the consideration, that no reduction of interest could be made without the consent of the public creditors themselves. It was solely by his address and management, that the companies of the Bank and South Sea agreed not only to reduce their own interest, but to furnish large sums for the discharge of such proprietors of the redeemables as should refuse to comply with an equal reduction; a striking proof of the general esteem in which he was held by the proprietors of the national debts; of their regard for his judgment, and confidence in his equity.

Defends his resignation.

The resignation of Walpole caused a great sensation in the house of commons, where regret for

* Historical Register for 1717, p. 150.—Some Considerations concerning the Public Funds, 1735, p. 11.

† Chandler.

the

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the want of his talents for finance, ſeemed to prevail, and he was as much inveighed againſt for reſigning, as he was afterwards reviled for remaining in power. His withdrawing from government at this criſis, was called a defection; a criminal conſpiracy, with a view to embarraſs the king, and to force him to comply with his unwarrantable demands. In anſwer to theſe accuſations, Walpole juſtly obſerved, "That perſons who had accepted places in the government, had often been reflected on for carrying on deſigns, and acting contrary to the intereſt of their country; but that he had never heard a man arraigned for laying down one of the moſt profitable places in the kingdom: that for his own part, if he would have complied with ſome meaſures, it had not been in the power of any of the preſent miniſters to remove him; but that he had reaſons for reſigning his employments, with which he had acquainted his majeſty, and might, perhaps, in a proper time, declare them to the houſe. In the mean while, the tenour of his conduct ſhould ſhew, that he never intended to make the king uneaſy, or to embarraſs his affairs *."

Reflected on by Stanhope.

But a more ſerious charge was brought againſt him by Stanhope, who obſerved, in the heat of debate, that "he would endeavour to make up by application, honeſty, and diſintereſtedneſs, what he wanted in abilities and experience. That he would content himſelf with the ſalary and lawful

* Chandler.

perquiſites

perquiſites of his office; and, though he had quitted a better place, he would not quarter himſelf upon any body. That he had no brothers, nor other relations to provide for; and that upon his firſt entering into the treaſury, he had made a ſtanding order againſt the late practice of granting reverſions of places." Walpole, touched with theſe inſinuations, complained in the firſt place of breach of friendſhip, and betraying private converſation. He then frankly owned, that while he was in employment, he had endeavoured to ſerve his friends and relations; than which, in his opinion, nothing was more reaſonable and juſt, "As to the granting of reverſions," he added, "I am willing to acquaint the houſe with the meaning of the charge which is now urged againſt me. I have no objections to the German miniſters, whom the king brought with him from Hanover, and who, as far as I had obſerved, had behaved themſelves like men of honour; but, there is a mean fellow *, of what nation I know not, who is eager to diſpoſe of employments. This man, having obtained the grant of a reverſion, which he deſigned for his ſon, I thought it too good for him, and therefore reſerved it for my own ſon. On this diſappointment, the foreigner was ſo impertinent as to demand £. 2,500, under pretence that he had been offered that ſum for the reverſion; but I was wiſer than to comply with his demands. And I am bold to acknowledge, one of the chief reaſons that

Chapter 17. 1717 to 1719.

* Alluding to Robethon.

made

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Period II. 1714 to 1720.

made me reſign was, becauſe I could not connive at ſome things that were carrying on *."

Conduct in oppoſition.

When Walpole aſſerted in the houſe, that he never intended to embarraſs the affairs of government, he either was not ſincere in his profeſſions, or if he was, did not poſſeſs that patriotic and diſintereſted firmneſs which could reſiſt the ſpirit of party; for almoſt from the moment of his reſignation, to his return into office, we find him uniform in his oppoſition to all the meaſures of government. We ſee him leagued with the Tories, and voting with Sir William Wyndham, Bromley, Shippen, and Snell; and we obſerve, not without regret at the inconſiſtency of human nature, Shippen expreſſing his ſatisfaction, that Walpole, when contending for the ſervice of his country, was no more afraid than himſelf of being called a Jacobite by thoſe who wanted other arguments to

Mutiny bill.

ſupport their debates †. We find him even oppoſing the mutiny bill, that neceſſary meaſure for the regulation of military diſcipline, and in the heat of argument, making uſe of this memorable expreſſion, "He that is for blood, ſhall have blood": But though he ſpoke thus ſtrenuouſly againſt the bill, he voted for it, and ſecured a large majority. Being reproached for his apparent inconſiſtency, he juſtified himſelf by declaring, that, although in the debate he was of opinion that mutiny and deſertion ſhould be puniſhed by the civil magiſtrate, yet he was convinced that thoſe

* Chandler.

† Chandler, vol. 6. p. 156.

crimes

crimes ſhould be puniſhed by the martial law, rather than eſcape with impunity *. We find him taking an active part againſt the repeal of the occaſional and ſchiſm bills, notwithſtanding his animated declaration, on a former occaſion, that the ſchiſm bill had more the appearance of a decree of Julian the apoſtate, than a law enacted by a proteſtant parliament, ſince it tended to raiſe as great a perſecution againſt our proteſtant brethren, as either the primitive chriſtians ever ſuffered from the heathen emperors, or the proteſtants from popery and the inquiſition †. In ſupport of the queſtion for reducing the troops, he afforded a ſtriking inſtance of inconſiſtency, by enlarging on the common topic of the danger of a ſtanding army in a free nation, and by inſiſting that 12,000 men were fully ſufficient. Yet at this very period, a rebellious ſpirit continued to ſubſiſt in England, and prevailed ſtill more in Scotland. Although the king of Sweden's deſign to ſupport the Pretender had been diſcovered, yet he ſtill perſiſted in his reſolution, and waited only for a favourable opportunity of carrying his project into execution. The queen of Spain, and cardinal Alberoni, had revived war in the ſouth of Europe, and were forming vaſt preparations; and the reception and encouragements given to the adherents of the Pretender, were ſure ſymptoms of their inclinations in his favour. Walpole was well aware of all theſe circumſtances, and could

Chapter 17. 1717 to 1719.

Schiſm bill.

Speaks for the reduction of the army.

* Hardwicke Papers.

† Chandler, 1712.—Tindal.

not

Period II. 1714 to 1720.

not be ignorant that the reduction of the army muſt have been attended with fatal conſequences, and therefore his ſupport of this meaſure could be dictated only by party reſentment.

Acquittal of Oxford.

We find him, who had ſpoken with ſuch heat and force of argument againſt the makers of the peace of Utrecht, who had been the indefatigable chairman of the ſecret committee, and had drawn up that able report, which brought ſuch heavy accuſations againſt Oxford, now grown languid and lukewarm in the proſecution, abſenting * himſelf from the committee ſo often, that another chairman was choſen in his place, and ironically complimented by Shippen, that he who was the moſt forward and active in the impeachment, had abated in his warmth ſince he was out of place †. At length, by his connivance, a feigned quarrel as to the mode of proceeding took place between the two houſes, and no proſecutors appearing on the day fixed for the continuance of the trial, Oxford was unanimouſly acquitted.

Inquiry into the conduct of lord Cadogan.

Walpole alſo, and the Whigs in oppoſition, whom Shippen humorouſly called his *new allies*, zealouſly ſupported the inquiry into the conduct of lord Cadogan, for fraud in the charge of tranſporting the Dutch troops, at the time of the rebellion, to and from Great Britain. Walpole ſpoke in this debate near two hours, and in the courſe of his ſpeech, ſtrained his voice ſo high, and uſed ſuch violent efforts, that the blood burſt

June 4th.

* Tindal. † Chandler.

from

from his noſe, and he was obliged to retire for ſome time from the houſe *. In anſwer to his arguments, it was ably obſerved by Lechmere, that the inquiry was frivolous, the reſult of party malice, and of the ſame nature with thoſe which had been inſtituted againſt Marlborough, Townſhend, and Walpole himſelf; and he juſtly obſerved, that thoſe perſons who were now moſt zealous about the inquiry, had been ſilent about theſe pretended frauds while they were in place. But the advocates for the inquiry were ſo powerful, that it was negatived only by a majority of 10 voices †. Chapter 17. 1717 to 1719.

But whatever were the motives by which Walpole was guided, he conſiderably influenced the houſe of commons, during the whole time of his oppoſition. Three days after his reſignation, Stanhope having moved for granting the ſum of £. 250,000 to enable the king to concert meaſures againſt Sweden; and Pulteney, who had juſt reſigned his place of ſecretary at war, having ſpoke with great vehemence againſt a German miniſtry, the motion was in great danger of being loſt, till Walpole cloſed the debate, by obſerving, "That having already ſpoken in favour of the ſupply, he ſhould now vote for it;" and the motion, in conſequence of his interference, was carried without a diviſion ‡. A few words in favour of Mr. Jackſon, who had offended the houſe by declaring that there were amongſt them a ſet of men who made it their Influence in parliament. Supports the Swediſh ſubſidy.

* Chandler.
† Hiſtorical Regiſter.—Chandler.
‡ Hiſtorical Regiſter.—Chandler.—Tindal.

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Period II. 1714 to 1720.

ſtudy and buſineſs to embarraſs the government, ſaved him from the Tower. And when Shippen ſaid, "the ſpeech from the throne ſeemed rather calculated for the meridian of Germany, than of Great Britain," and urged, as the only infelicity of his majeſty's reign, that he was unacquainted with our language and conſtitution; a few palliating expreſſions from Walpole would have been attended with the ſame effect, if the inflexible orator had not maintained what he had advanced, and by that obſtinacy occaſioned his own commitment*. Even in the article of ſupplies, he occaſionally prevailed againſt the miniſtry. In ſpeaking for the diminution of the army eſtimates, his propoſal, that £.650,000, inſtead of £.681,618, ſhould be granted for defraying the charges of guards and garriſons † was adopted; and in the ſame ſeſſion, when the miniſtry demanded £.130,361, for the pay of reduced officers, and the Tories would only grant £.80,000, Walpole propoſed a medium of £.99,000; and his motion was carried without a diviſion.

December 4th 1717.

December 9th 1718.

South Sea loan applied to the ſinking fund.

A propoſal from the South Sea company, for advancing £.700,000, having been accepted by the houſe, ſome of the members were for applying it towards the preſent and growing neceſſities of the government. But in a grand committee of ways and means, Walpole, in favour of his ſinking fund, inſiſting that the public debts already incurred ſhould be firſt conſidered, a reſolution was

January 12, 1719.

* Chandler, vol. 6. p. 157. † Chandler, vol. 6. p. 175.

taken,

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taken, and a bill afterwards brought in, directing the application of this money, agreeably to his sentiments. "It is indeed plain," adds a virulent pamphleteer, who decried the administration of Sir Robert Walpole, that "in all transactions of money affairs, the house relied more upon his judgment than on that of any other member*."

Chapter 17. 1717 to 1719.

Thus it appears that Walpole, even when in opposition, almost managed the house of commons; and being in opposition he could not gain that ascendancy, by the means of corruption and influence, which were afterwards so repeatedly urged against him, and which the same virulent author calls "some SECRET MAGIC of *which he seemed to have been a perfect master.*" In fact, the magic which he applied, was derived from profound knowledge of finance, great skill in debate, in which perspicuity and sound sense were eminently conspicuous, unimpeached integrity of character, and the assistance of party.

Walpole was no less vehement in his opposition to those measures of government which related to foreign affairs, and which, at this time, embraced a very large field for approbation or censure. The fatal consequences of the peace of Utrecht, placed England in a very delicate situation between the opposite pretensions of Spain and Austria. To satisfy both was impracticable; but the alliance with France, concerted by Walpole and Townshend, and the necessity of opposing the unjust schemes and dangerous intrigues of Cardinal Alberoni, com-

Foreign transactions.

* History of the Administration of Sir Robert Walpole, p. 113.

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Period II. 1714 to 1720.

pelled Great Britain to ſide with the Emperor. Yet though it was generally known that Spain, in concert with Sweden, meditated a deſcent on our coaſts, to overturn the eſtabliſhed government, and ſet the Pretender on the throne; though Philip the Fifth graſped at the poſſeſſion of Gibraltar and Minorca, and the ſubverſion of the regent's power in France; and the ambition of his conſort, Elizabeth Farneſe, aimed at the acquiſition of the Italian provinces for her ſon; though a Spaniſh fleet had been ſent into the Mediterranean, and a Spaniſh army had over-run the kingdom of Sardinia, and threatened the reduction of Sicily, no attempts ſeem to have been wanting on the ſide of England, to induce the king of Spain, by perſuaſions, to adopt pacific meaſures. Immediate preparations were arranged with the Emperor, France, and the United Provinces, and every proper meaſure was concerted with thoſe powers to prevent hoſtilities. Cadogan was ſent to the Hague, Dubois came to London, and ſettled with the miniſtry, terms for an accommodation between the Emperor and the king of Spain *. George the Firſt even proceeded ſo far as to propoſe the ceſſion of Gibraltar †, on the conſideration of an equivalent, and permitted the regent duke of Orleans to make the offer to the king of Spain, if he would ratify the terms ſpecified in the treaty, called the quadruple alliance, paſſed at London on the 2d of Auguſt 1718, between the Emperor, England, and

* Tindal, vol. 19. p. 167.

† See Chapter on Gibraltar, in Period IV.

France,

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France, and afterwards acceded to by the United Provinces.

By this alliance, the Emperor renounced all claims to the crown of Spain, conſented, that Tuſcany, Parma, and Placentia, as male fiefs of the empire, ſhould deſcend, in default of male heirs, to Don Carlos, eldeſt ſon of Elizabeth Farneſe, by Philip the Fifth. In return for theſe conceſſions, the Emperor was to be gratified with the poſſeſſion of Sicily, in lieu of which territory, Sardinia was to be allotted to Victor Amadeus. The terms to be impoſed on Philip were, the renunciation of all claims to the dominions of the Emperor, in Italy, and the Netherlands. Three months being allowed to Philip for the acceptance of theſe conditions, Stanhope himſelf employed this interval in conducting the negotiation in perſon: he repaired to Paris, and afrer adjuſting meaſures with the regent proceeded to Madrid. In a conference with Alberoni, he repreſented that a French army was preparing to invade Spain, and that a Britiſh ſquadron, under the command of admiral Byng, was ſailing for the Mediterranean, with orders to attack and deſtroy the Spaniſh fleet, if Sicily was not evacuated: he even gave a liſt of the number and force of the Ships, to convince him of their evident ſuperiority *. Theſe overtures were rejected with haughtineſs and even contempt. Stanhope's immediate departure from Spain became the ſignal for war; the French troops advanced, admiral Byng attacked, captured and deſtroyed the greater

* Earl Stanhope's Letter to Secretary Craggs; Hardwicke Papers.

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part of the Spaniſh fleet. The king of Spain, diſappointed in his hopes of making an impreſſion on England, by the death of Charles the Twelfth, and the defection of the Czar, was compelled to diſmiſs Alberoni, and to accede to the quadruple alliance.

Oppoſes the war with Spain. March 17, 1718.

During the whole progreſs of theſe tranſactions, Walpole ſtrenuouſly oppoſed the conduct of government. On the motion, made by Sir William Strickland, for an addreſs of thanks to the king for his unwearied endeavours to promote the welfare of his kingdoms, and to preſerve the tranquillity of Europe, and to aſſure him that the houſe would make good ſuch exceedings of men for the ſea ſervice, for the year 1718, as his majeſty ſhould find neceſſary *, Walpole obſerved, that ſuch an addreſs had all the air of a declaration of war againſt Spain. In the following ſeſſions, when ſecretary Craggs laid before the houſe, copies of ſome of the treaties relating to the quadruple alliance, alluded to in the ſpeech from the throne, Walpole no leſs warmly objected to the words in the motion for an addreſs, expreſſing the entire ſatisfaction of the houſe in thoſe meaſures which the king had already taken;

Nov. 11.

he urged, "That it was againſt the common rules of prudence, and the methods of proceeding in that houſe, to approve a thing before they knew what it was; that he was thoroughly convinced of, and as ready as any perſon in that aſſembly, to acknowledge his majeſty's great care for the general peace of Europe, and the intereſt of Great Britain;

* Chandler.

but

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but that to ſanction, in the manner propoſed, the late meaſures, could have no other view than to ſcreen miniſters, who were conſcious of having done ſomething amiſs, and who having begun a war againſt Spain, would now make it the parliament's war: and concluded, by expreſſing an entire diſſatisfaction at a conduct contrary to the law of nations, and a breach of ſolemn treaties*." When Craggs, in reply, gave an abſtract of the articles of the quadruple alliance, Walpole, after reiterating his profeſſions of duty and affection to the king, diſtinguiſhed between him and his miniſters, and expreſſed his unwillingneſs to approve the meaſures purſued, until the treaties on which thoſe meaſures were founded had been fully and maturely examined†. Craggs having preſented the tranſlations of the remaining treaties, and the king having ſent a meſſage, that he had declared war againſt Spain, Walpole combated the addreſs, and while his brother Horace made a long ſpeech againſt the quadruple alliance, and particularly argued that the grant of Sicily to the Emperor in exchange for Sardinia, was a breach of the treaty of Utrecht, he himſelf exclaimed againſt the injuſtice of attacking the Spaniſh fleet before the declaration of war‡. But the anſwer given to this violent declamation by the miniſterial advocates, was not unreaſonable. They ſtated, that the blame could attach only to Spain; the conduct of the king and miniſters was

Chapter 17. 1717 to 1719.

Nov. 13. Dec. 17.

* Chandler.
† Chandler.
‡ Chandler, vol. 6. p. 191.

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agreeable to the law of nations, and to the rules of equity. Was it juſt to attack Sardinia, without any previous declaration of war, and while the Emperor was engaged with the Turks? Was it juſt to invade Sicily, without the leaſt provocation? And was it not juſt in the king of England to vindicate the faith of treaties, and to protect the trade of his ſubjects, which had been violently oppreſſed? But though Walpole might in this, and other inſtances, appear influenced by the ſpirit of party, yet the arguments which he and his friends urged againſt the articles of the quadruple alliance, are proved by experience to have been well founded. For although the acceſſion of Spain ſeemed to complete the peace of Utrecht, ſince the Emperor acknowledged Philip king of Spain, and Philip renounced all claims to the Netherlands, the Milaneſe, Naples, and Sicily, yet thoſe two princes were too much irritated to enter cordially into this ſcheme of pacification: both parties had made ceſſions without relinquiſhing their reſpective pretenſions, and it will be difficult to decide, whether the Emperor or Philip were moſt diſſatisfied with the quadruple alliance.

Objects to the quadruple alliance.

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CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH:

1718—1719.

Origin and Progreſs of the Peerage Bill.—Oppoſition and Speech of Walpole.—Bill rejected.

Chapter 18. 1718 to 1719.

IN oppoſition to the peerage bill, Walpole employed all his talents and eloquence, and bore the moſt conſpicuous part in obtaining its defeat.

Motives for the introduction of the peerage bill.

This bill was projected by Sunderland; his views were, to reſtrain the power of the prince of Wales, when he came to the throne, whom he had offended beyond all hopes of forgiveneſs, and to extend and perpetuate his own influence, by the creation of many new peers. The unfortunate miſunderſtanding between the king and his ſon, which had recently increaſed to a very alarming degree, favoured the ſucceſs of his ſcheme; and the king, from a motive of mean jealouſy, was induced to give up this important and honourable branch of his royal prerogative, and to ſtrip the crown of its brighteſt jewel. Sunderland had little difficulty in acquiring a large majority in the houſe of lords, in favour of a meaſure which ſo highly increaſed their power; the whole body of the Scotch peers in the upper houſe were gained by the promiſe of an hereditary ſeat, and many of the lords, who from form oppoſed the bill, were ſecretly not averſe to its paſſing. Being ſecure of the lords, he relied for ſucceſs in the houſe of commons, on the known abhorrence

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abhorrence of the Whigs, who formed a large majority, to the creation of the twelve peers, during the adminiſtration of Oxford; he had been witneſs to their repeated and vehement aſſeverations, that the crown ought in future to be deprived of a prerogative which by that act had brought diſhonour on Great Britain, and endangered the liberties of Europe. Even the Whigs in oppoſition he thought could not venture to obſtruct a bill of ſuch a nature, without loſing the confidence of their party. Under theſe circumſtances, a bill to limit the number of peers was propoſed.

The king's meſſage. March 2d.

The king ſent a meſſage to the houſe, that, "he had ſo much at heart the ſettling the peerage of the whole kingdom, on ſuch a foundation as might ſecure the freedom and conſtitution of parliament in all future ages, that he was willing his prerogative ſhould not ſtand in the way of ſo great and neceſſary a work*." In conſequence of this meſſage, a bill was brought in "to ſettle and limit the peerage in ſuch a manner, that the number of Engliſh peers ſhould not be enlarged beyond ſix of the preſent number, which, upon failure of iſſue male, might be ſupplied by new creations: that, inſtead of the ſixteen elective peers from Scotland, twenty-five ſhould be made hereditary on the part of that kingdom; and that this number, upon failure of heirs male, ſhould be ſupplied from the other members of the Scotch peerage†." After a ſtrenuous oppoſition from Cowper, and ſome partial ob-

* Journals of the Houſe of Lords.—Chandler.

† Lords' Journals.

jections

jections from Townſhend and Nottingham, the bill was twice read, and the articles agreed to without diviſion; but on the day appointed for a third reading, Stanhope obſerved, "That the bill having made a great noiſe, and raiſed ſtrange apprehenſions; and ſince the deſign of it had been ſo miſrepreſented, and ſo miſunderſtood, that it was like to meet with great oppoſition in the other houſe, he thought it adviſable to let that matter lie ſtill till a more proper opportunity*." Chapter 18. 1718 to 1719. March 14th. Bill withdrawn.

The unpopularity of the meaſure, and the ferment it had excited in the nation, were the motives which induced Sunderland to withdraw the motion at the moment of certain ſucceſs in the houſe of lords. In vain the pen of Addiſon had been employed in defending the bill, in a paper called *The Old Whig*, againſt Steele, who attacked it in a pamphlet intitled *The Plebeian*; and whoſe arguments had greater weight with the public. Walpole alſo publiſhed a pamphlet on the ſame ſide of the queſtion, "*The Thoughts of a Member of the lower Houſe, in relation to a Project for reſtraining and limiting the Power of the Crown in the future Creation of Peers*†." In this publication, he explained the nature of the bill, and expoſed the views of thoſe who introduced it, with a perſpicuity of argument, and ſimplicity of ſtyle adapted to all capacities, and calculated to make a general impreſſion. Its unpopularity. Walpole's pamphlet.

The miniſter however, did not relinquiſh his darling bill. During the interval between the pro- Sunderland's efforts.

* Lords' Journals.

† Royal and Noble Authors, vol. 2. p. 140.

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rogation and meeting of parliament, he exerted every effort to engage a majority in its favour. Bribes were profuſely laviſhed, promiſes and threats were alternately employed, in every ſhape which his ſanguine and overbearing temper could ſuggeſt, He affected to declare, that it was the king's deſire, and not the act of the miniſtry; he did not attempt to conceal that it was levelled againſt the future government of the prince of Wales, whom he repreſented as capable of *doing mad things* * when he came to the throne. He declared that the neceſſary conſequence of its rejection would be the ruin of the Whigs, and the introduction of the Tories into the confidence and favour of the king; expreſſed his ſurpriſe that any perſon who ſtyled himſelf a Whig ſhould oppoſe it; and exerted himſelf in the buſineſs with ſo much heat and violence, that in endeavouring to perſuade Middleton, lord chancellor of Ireland, who refuſed to ſupport the meaſure in the Britiſh houſe of commons, the blood guſhed from his noſe †.

Meeting of the Whigs at Devonſhire houſe.

Theſe efforts were attended with ſuch ſucceſs, that at a meeting held by the leaders of the Whigs in oppoſition, at Devonſhire houſe, Walpole found the whole body lukewarm, irreſolute, or deſponding: ſeveral of the peers ſecretly favoured a bill which would increaſe their importance; others declared, that as Whigs, it would be a manifeſt inconſiſtency to object to a meaſure tending to pre-

* Lord Middleton's converſation with Lord Sunderland. Correſpondence, Period II.

† See Lord Middleton's Letters and Minutes. Correſpondence, Period II.

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vent the repetition of an abuſe of prerogative againſt which they had repeatedly inveighed; thoſe who were ſincerely averſe to it, were unwilling to exert themſelves in hopeleſs reſiſtance, and it was the prevailing opinion that the bill ſhould be permitted to paſs without oppoſition. Walpole alone diſſented, and reprobated, in the ſtrongeſt terms, this reſolution as daſtardly and impolitic. He maintained that it was the only point on which they could harraſs adminiſtration with any proſpect of ſucceſs; that he would place it in ſuch a light as to excite indignation in every independent commoner; that he ſaw a ſpirit riſing againſt it among the Whigs, and particularly among the country gentlemen, who were otherwiſe not averſe to ſupport government. He ſaid, that he had overheard a member of the houſe of commons, a country gentleman, who poſſeſſed an eſtate of not more than £. 800 a year, declare to another with great warmth, that although he had no chance of being made a peer himſelf, yet, he would never conſent to the injuſtice of giving a perpetual excluſion to his family. He was convinced, he added, that the ſame ſentiment would have a ſtrong effect upon the whole body of country gentlemen; and concluded his animated remonſtrances, by declaring, that if deſerted by his party, he himſelf would ſingly ſtand forth and oppoſe it. This declaration, urged with uncommon vehemence, occaſioned much altercation, and many perſuaſions were made to deter him from adopting a meaſure which appeared chimerical and abſurd; but when they found that he perſiſted, the

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the whole party gradually came over to his opinion, and agreed that an oppoſition ſhould be made to it in the houſe of commons*.

Bill paſſes the lords.

The bill was again introduced to the notice of parliament, at the opening of the ſeſſion, by the following artful expreſſions in the king's ſpeech: "If the neceſſities of my government have ſometimes engaged your duty and affection to intruſt me with powers, of which you have always, with good reaſon, been jealous, the whole world muſt acknowledge they have been ſo uſed, as to juſtify the confidence you have repoſed in me. And as I can truly affirm, that no prince was ever more zealous to increaſe his own authority, than I am to perpetuate the liberty of my people, I hope you will think of all proper methods to eſtabliſh and tranſmit to your poſterity, the freedom of our happy conſtitution, and particularly to ſecure that part, which is moſt liable to abuſe. I value myſelf upon being the firſt, who hath given you an opportunity of doing it; and I muſt recommend it to you, to compleat thoſe meaſures, which remained imperfect the laſt ſeſſion†."

This ſpeech was made the 23d of November; on the 25th, the duke of Buckingham brought the bill into the houſe, where it was only oppoſed by Cowper. It was committed on the 26th, ingroſſed on the 28th, paſſed the 30th, and ſent down to the

Sent to the commons.

* See ſpeaker Onſlow's Remarks on Oppoſition. Correſpondence.

† Journals.—Chandler.

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houſe of commons on the 1ſt of December*. At this period the bill had undergone no alteration from that propoſed in the laſt ſeſſion; but it was underſtood, that in order to conciliate the commons, the king was willing to give up another branch of his prerogative, that of pardoning in caſes of impeachment, and the lords would wave their privilege of *ſcandalum magnatum*†. Chapter 18. 1718 to 1719.

This memorable bill was read a ſecond time on the 8th of December‡, and a motion made for committing it, gave riſe to a long and warm debate: it was principally ſupported by Craggs, ſecretary of ſtate, Aiſlabie, chancellor of the exchequer, Lechmere, attorney-general, and Hampden; it was oppoſed by Sir Richard Steele in a very maſterly ſpeech, by Smith, Sir John Packington, Methuen, and Walpole.

On this occaſion he forſook his uſual mode of debating, which was plain, and ſeldom decorated with metaphorical ornaments, and, with great animation, began his ſpeech by introducing this claſſical alluſion: Walpole's ſpeech.

"Among the Romans, the temple of fame was placed behind the temple of virtue, to denote that

* Journals.—Chandler.

† Words ſpoken in derogation of a peer, a judge, or other great officer of the realm, are called *ſcandalum magnatum*, and, though they be ſuch as would not be actionable in the caſe of a common perſon, yet when ſpoken in diſgrace of ſuch high and reſpectable characters, they amount to an atrocious injury, which is redreſſed by an action on the caſe, founded on many ancient ſtatutes; as well on behalf of the crown to inflict the puniſhment of impriſonment on the ſlanderer, as on behalf of the party to recover damages for the injury ſuſtained.—Blackſtone's Commentaries. B. 3. C. 8.

‡ See Journals.—Chandler, by miſtake, ſays the 7th.

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there was no coming to the temple of fame, but through that of virtue. But if this bill is paſſed into a law, one of the moſt powerful incentives to virtue would be taken away, ſince there would be no arriving at honour, but through the winding-ſheet of an old decrepit lord, or the grave of an extinct noble family: a policy very different from that glorious and enlightened nation, who made it their pride to hold out to the world illuſtrious examples of merited elevation,

" *Patere honoris ſcirent ut cuncti viam.*

" It is very far from my thoughts to depreciate the advantages, or detract from the reſpect due to illuſtrious birth; for though the philoſopher may ſay with the poet,

Et genus et proavos, et quæ non facimus ipſi,
Vix ea noſtra voco;

yet the claim derived from that advantage, though fortuitous, is ſo generally and ſo juſtly conceded, that every endeavour to ſubvert the principle, would merit contempt and abhorrence. But though illuſtrious birth forms one undiſputed title to pre-eminence, and ſuperior conſideration, yet ſurely it ought not to be the only one. The origin of high titles was derived from the will of the ſovereign to reward ſignal ſervices, or conſpicuous merit, by a recompence which, ſurviving to poſterity, ſhould diſplay in all ages the virtues of the receiver, and the gratitude of the donor. Is merit then ſo rarely diſcernible, or is gratitude ſo ſmall a virtue in our days, that the one muſt be ſuppoſed to be its own reward, and the other limited to a barren

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diſplay of impotent good-will? Had this bill originated with ſome noble peer of diſtinguiſhed anceſtry, it would have excited leſs ſurpriſe; a deſire to exclude others from a participation of honours, is no novelty in perſons of that claſs: *Quod ex aliorum meritis ſibi arrogant, id mihi ex meis aſcribi nolunt.*

" But it is matter of juſt ſurpriſe, that a bill of this nature ſhould either have been projected, or at leaſt promoted by a gentleman * who was, not long ago, ſeated amongſt us, and who, having got into the houſe of peers, is now deſirous to ſhut the door after him.

" When great alterations in the conſtitution are to be made, the experiment ſhould be tried for a ſhort time before the propoſed change is finally carried into execution, leſt it ſhould produce evil inſtead of good; but in this caſe, when the bill is once ſanctioned by parliament, there can be no future hopes of redreſs, becauſe the upper houſe will always oppoſe the repeal of an act, which has ſo conſiderably increaſed their power. The great unanimity with which this bill has paſſed the lords, ought to inſpire ſome jealouſy in the commons; for it muſt be obvious, that whatever the lords gain, muſt be acquired at the loſs of the commons, and the diminution of the regal prerogative; and that in all diſputes between the lords and commons, when the houſe of lords is immutable, the commons muſt ſooner or later, be obliged to recede.

* Lord Stanhope.

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" The view of the miniſtry in framing this bill, is plainly nothing but to ſecure their power in the houſe of lords. The principal argument on which the neceſſity of it is founded, is drawn from the miſchief occaſioned by the creation of twelve peers during the reign of queen Anne, for the purpoſe of carying an infamous peace through the houſe of lords; that was only a temporary meaſure, whereas the miſchief to be occaſioned by this bill, will be perpetual. It creates thirty-one peers by authority of parliament; ſo extraordinary a ſtep cannot be ſuppoſed to be taken without ſome ſiniſter deſign in future. The miniſtry want no additional ſtrength in the houſe of lords, for conducting the common affairs of government, as is ſufficiently proved by the unanimity with which they have carried through this bill. If, therefore, they think it neceſſary to acquire additional ſtrength, it muſt be done with views and intentions more extravagant and hoſtile to the conſtitution, than any which have yet been attempted. The bill itſelf is of a moſt inſidious and artful nature. The immediate creation of nine Scotch peers, and the reſervation of ſix Engliſh peers for a neceſſary occaſion, is of double uſe; to be ready for the houſe of lords if wanted, and to engage three times the number in the houſe of commons by hopes and promiſes.

" To ſanction this attempt, the king is induced to affect to wave ſome part of his prerogative; but this is merely an oſtenſible renunciation, unfounded in fact, or reaſon. I am deſirous to treat of

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of all points relating to the private affairs of his majeſty, with the utmoſt tenderneſs and caution, but I ſhould wiſh to aſk the houſe, and I think I can anticipate the anſwer; Has any ſuch queſtion been upon the tapis, as no man would forgive the authors, that ſhould put them under the neceſſity of voting againſt either ſide *? Are there any misfortunes, which every honeſt man ſecretly laments and bewails, and would think the laſt of miſchiefs, ſhould they ever become the ſubject of public and parliamentary converſations? Cannot numbers that hear me teſtify, from the ſolicitations and whiſpers they have met with, that there are men ready and determined to attempt theſe things if they had a proſpect of ſucceſs? If they have thought, but I hope they are miſtaken in their opinion of this houſe, that the chief obſtacle would ariſe in the houſe of lords, where they have always been tender upon perſonal points, eſpecially to any of their own body, does not this project enable them to carry any queſtion through the houſe of lords? Muſt not the twenty-five Scots peers accept upon any terms, or be for ever excluded? Or will not twenty-five be found in all Scotland that will? How great will the temptation be likewiſe to ſix Engliſh, to fill the preſent vacancies? And ſhall we then, with our eyes open, take this ſtep, which I cannot but look upon as the beginning of woe and confuſion; and ſhall we, under theſe apprehenſions, break through the Union, and

* He here probably alluded to the miſunderſtanding between the king and prince of Wales.

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ſhut up the door of honour? It certainly will have that effect; nay, the very argument advanced in its ſupport, that it will add weight to the commons, by keeping the rich men there, admits that it will be an excluſion.

"But we are told, that his majeſty has voluntarily conſented to this limitation of his prerogative. It may be true; but may not the king have been deceived? Which if it is ever to be ſuppoſed, muſt be admitted in this caſe. It is incontrovertible, that kings have been over-ruled by the importunity of their miniſters to remove, or to take into adminiſtration, perſons who are diſagreeable to them. The character of the king furniſhes us alſo a ſtrong proof that he has been deceived; for although it is a fact, that in Hanover, where he poſſeſſes abſolute power, he never tyranniſed over his ſubjects, or deſpotically exerciſed his authority, yet, can one inſtance be produced when he ever gave up a prerogative?

"If the conſtitution is to be amended in the houſe of lords, the greateſt abuſes ought to be firſt corrected. But what is the abuſe, againſt which this bill ſo vehemently inveighs, and which it is intended to correct? The abuſe of the prerogative in creating an occaſional number of peers, is a prejudice only to the lords, it can rarely be a prejudice to the commons, but muſt generally be exerciſed in their favour; and ſhould it be argued, that in caſe of a difference between the two houſes, the king may exerciſe that branch of his prerogative, with a view to force the commons to recede,

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we may reply, that upon a difference with the commons, the king poſſeſſes his negative, and the exerciſe of that negative would be leſs culpable than making peers to ſcreen himſelf. Chapter 18. 1718 to 1719.

" But the ſtrongeſt argument againſt the bill is, that it will not only be a diſcouragement to virtue and merit, but would endanger our excellent conſtitution; for as there is a due balance between the three branches of the legiſlature, it will deſtroy that balance, and conſequently ſubvert the whole conſtitution, by cauſing one of the three powers, which are now dependent on each other, to preponderate in the ſcale. The crown is dependent upon the commons by the power of granting money; the commons are dependent on the crown by the power of diſſolution: The lords will now be made independent of both.

" The ſixteen elective Scotch peers, already admit themſelves to be a dead court weight, yet the ſame ſixteen are now to be made hereditary, and nine added to their number. Theſe twenty-five, under the influence of corrupt miniſters, may find their account in betraying their truſt; the majority of the lords may alſo find their account in ſupporting ſuch miniſters; but the commons, and the commons only, muſt ſuffer for all, and be deprived of every advantage. If the propoſed meaſure deſtroys two negatives in the crown, it gives a negative to theſe twenty-five united, and confers a power, ſuperior to that of the king himſelf, on the head of a clan, who will have the power of recommending many. The Scotch commoners

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can have no other view in ſupporting this meaſure, but the expected aggrandizement of their own chiefs. It will diſſolve the allegiance of the Scotch peers who are not amongſt the twenty-five, and who can never hope for the benefit of an election to be peers of parliament, and almoſt enact obedience from the ſovereign to the betrayers of the conſtitution.

"The preſent view of the bill is dangerous; the view to poſterity, perſonal and unpardonable; it will make the lords maſters of the king, according to their own confeſſion, when they admit, that a change of adminiſtration renders a new creation of peers neceſſary; for by precluding the king from making peers in future, it at the ſame time precludes him from changing the preſent adminiſtration, who will naturally fill the vacancies with their own creatures; and the new peers will adhere to the firſt miniſter, with the ſame zeal and unanimity as thoſe created by Oxford adhered to him.

"If when the parliament was made ſeptennial, the power of diſſolving it before the end of ſeven years had been wreſted from the crown, would not ſuch an alteration have added immenſe authority to the commons? and yet, the prerogative of the crown in diſſolving parliaments, may be, and has been oftener abuſed, than the power of creating peers.

"But it may be obſerved, that the king, for his own ſake, will rarely make a great number of peers, for they, being uſually created by the influence

fluence of the firſt miniſter, ſoon become, upon a change of adminiſtration, a weight againſt the crown; and had queen Anne lived, the truth of this obſervation would have been verified in the caſe of moſt of the twelve peers made by Oxford. Let me aſk, however, is the abuſe of any prerogative a ſufficient reaſon for totally annihilating that prerogative? Under that conſideration, the power of diſſolving parliaments ought to be taken away, becauſe that power has been more exerciſed, and more abuſed than any of the other prerogatives; yet in 1641, when the king had aſſented to a law that diſabled him from proroguing or diſſolving parliament, without the conſent of both houſes, he was from that time under ſubjection to the parliament, and from thence followed all the ſubſequent miſchiefs, and his own deſtruction. It may alſo be aſked, Whether the prerogative of making peace and war has never been abuſed? I might here call to your recollection the peace of Utrecht, and the preſent war with Spain. Yet who will preſume to adviſe that the power of making war and peace, ſhould be taken from the crown? Chapter 18. 1718 to 1719.

"How can the lords expect the commons to give their concurrence to a bill by which they and their poſterity are to be for ever excluded from the peerage? How would they themſelves receive a bill which ſhould prevent a baron from being made a viſcount, a viſcount an earl, an earl a marquis, and a marquis a duke? Would they conſent to limit the number of any rank of peerage? Cer-

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Period II. 1714 to 1720.

tainly none; unleſs, perhaps, the dukes. If the pretence for this meaſure is, that it will tend to ſecure the freedom of parliament, I ſay that there are many other ſteps more important and leſs equivocal, ſuch as the diſcontinuance of bribes and penſions.

"That this bill will ſecure the liberty of parliament, I totally deny; it will ſecure a great preponderance to the peers; it will form them into a compact impenetrable phalanx, by giving them the power to exclude, in all caſes of extinction and creation, all ſuch perſons from their body, who may be obnoxious to them. In the inſtances we have ſeen of their judgment in ſome late caſes, ſufficient marks of partiality may be found to put us on our guard againſt committing to them the power they would derive from this bill, of judging the right of latent or dormant titles, when their verdict would be of ſuch immenſe importance. If gentlemen will not be convinced by argument, at leaſt, let them not ſhut their ears to the dreadful example of former times; let them recollect that the overweening diſpoſition of the great barons, to aggrandize their own dignity, occaſioned them to exclude the leſſer barons, and to that circumſtance may be fairly attributed the ſanguinary wars which ſo long deſolated the country *."

* The ſubſtance of this ſpeech is collected from memorandums in Sir Robert Walpole's own hand-writing, among lord Orford's papers.—See alſo, Onſlow on Oppoſition, Correſpondence, Period II.—Hiſtorical Regiſter, 1719.—Chandler.

The

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The effect of this speech on the house, exceeded the most sanguine expectation; it fixed those who had before been wavering and irresolute, brought over many who had been tempted by the speciousness of the measure to favour its introduction, and procured its rejection by a triumphant majority of 269 against 177.

Bill rejected.

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PERIOD THE THIRD:

From the South Sea Act, to the Death of GEORGE the First:

1720—1727.

CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH:

1720.

Origin and Progreſs of the South Sea Company.—Their Project for liquidating the National Debt.—Eſpouſed by the Miniſtry.—Oppoſed by Walpole.—Accepted by Parliament.—Walpole reconciles the King and the Prince of Wales.—Forms a Coalition with Sunderland.—Townſhend appointed Preſident of the Council.—Walpole Paymaſter of the Forces.—Retires into the Country.

Origin of the South Sea Company.

THE commencement of this period forms a memorable æra in the political life of Sir Robert Walpole, and holds him forth as the reſtorer of the national credit, which the fatal effects of the South Sea ſcheme had brought to the brink of deſtruction.

The South Sea Company owed its origin to a chimerical project, formed by Harley in 1711, for the purpoſe of reſtoring public credit, which had been greatly affected by the diſmiſſion of the Whig miniſtry, and of eſtabliſhing a fund for the diſcharge of the navy and army debentures, and the other parts of the floating debt, which amounted to

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to £. 9,471,325; and was afterwards increaſed to £. 10,000,000. With a view to ſettle a fund for paying the intereſt of 6 per cent. on theſe arrears, which amounted to the annual ſum of £. 568,279, all the duties upon wines, vinegar, tobacco, India goods, wrought ſilks, whale fins, and a few other duties, were rendered permanent. In order to allure the creditors with the hopes of advantages from a new commerce, the monopoly of a trade to the South Sea, or coaſt of Spaniſh America, was granted to a company compoſed of the proprietors of this funded debt, which being incorporated by act of parliament, took the appellation of the South Sea Company *. The great advantages to be derived from this commerce, had been exaggerated from the time of our firſt voyages to Spaniſh America, in the reign of Elizabeth, and ſtill farther increaſed by the reports of the buccaneers. The conſiderable riches which France had brought from America, ſince the eſtabliſhment of Philip the Fifth on the throne of Spain, had contributed to raiſe the ſanguine expectations of the Britiſh merchants; a rumour, induſtriouſly circulated, that four ports on the coaſts of Peru and Chili, were to be ceded by Spain, inflamed the general ardour; the proſpect of exchanging gold, ſilver, and rich drugs for the manufactures of England, were plauſible allurements for an enterpriſing and commercial nation; and the mines of Potoſi and Mexico, were to diffuſe their inex-

Chapter 19. 1720.

* James Poſtlethwayt's Hiſtorical State of the South Sea Company. Anderſon on Commerce, vol. 3, p. 43. Tindal, vol. 17. p. 361.

hauſtible

Period III. 1720 to 1727.

hauſtible ſtores through the medium of the new company.

Progreſs and ſuſpenſion of their trade.

The famous act of parliament, which incorporated the ſubſcribers of the debts, under the name of the governor and company of merchants of Great Britain trading to the South Seas and other parts of America, was called the earl of Oxford's maſter piece, and conſidered by his panegyriſts as the ſure means of bringing an inexhauſtible mine of riches into England. But in fact this ſcheme was ſettled on a falſe foundation; for by the peace of Utrecht, Spain and the Indies being confirmed to Philip the Fifth, that monarch was too jealous to admit the Engliſh to a free trade in the South Sea, and inſtead of the advantageous commerce which Oxford had held forth, the company obtained only the * aſſiento contract, or the privilege of ſupplying the Spaniſh colonies of America with negroes for 30 years, with the permiſſion of ſending to Spaniſh America an annual ſhip, limited both as to tonnage and value of cargo, of the profits of which the king of Spain reſerved one fourth, and five per cent. on the other fourths †. This diſappointment was attempted to be counteracted by the declaration made by Oxford, that Spain had permitted two ſhips, in addition to the annual ſhip, to carry merchandize, during the firſt year to the northern coaſts of Spaniſh America, and a pompous nomination of the ſeveral ports where the company had leave to trade, and ſettle factories. But the grand benefits of this com-

1713.

* Aſſiento is a Spaniſh word, ſignifying a firm or contract.

† Anderſon, vol. 3. page 55.

merce

merce were never realiſed. The firſt voyage of the annual ſhip was not made till 1717, and in the following year, the trade was ſuppreſſed by the rupture with Spain. Their effects, factories, and ſervants were ſeized and detained, notwithſtanding the agreement in the aſſiento, which allowed, in caſe of a rupture, eighteen months for the removal of their effects. Chapter 19. 1720.

Such was the ſtate of the South Sea Company, when the miniſtry, inſtead of attempting to leſſen the national incumbrances, by the only juſt and ſucceſsful means, a clear and inviolable ſinking fund, adopted the viſionary ſchemes of projectors, and gave to the Company the power of faſcinating the minds of the public, and ſpreading an infatuation ſimilar to that which had recently involved France in a national bankruptcy. The grand point which government had in view, was the reduction of the irredeemable annuities, created in the reigns of William and Anne, for a period of 89, 96, and 99 years, amounting nearly to £.800,000 per annum, as no effectual meaſures could be adopted to leſſen the public debts, whilſt theſe annuities remained irredeemable. Plan of liquidating the national debt.

In order to effect this liquidation, the miniſter accepted propoſals from the South Sea Company, for reducing the debts to a redeemable ſtate: as the object of the miniſters, who had previouſly and ſecretly arranged the ſcheme with the directors, was to ſurpriſe the houſe of commons into the meaſure of granting this extenſive privilege to the South Sea Company, and of preventing competition, Propoſal laid before parliament.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

tion, they entertained the moſt ſanguine hopes of ſucceſs, from the ſpecious advantages which they held forth to the public as the neceſſary conſequences. They accordingly laid the buſineſs before a committee of the houſe of commons *. Aiſlabie having opened the propoſal of the South Sea Company, and declared, that, if it was accepted, the national debt could be liquidated in twenty-ſix years, was followed by ſecretary Craggs, who after congratulating the chancellor of the exchequer, on the clear and intelligible manner in which he had explained the buſineſs, and the nation on the proſpect of diſcharging the debt ſooner than was generally expected, concluded by obſerving, that no other regular motion could be made, than that the chairman ſhould report progreſs, and deſire leave to ſit again, as he took it for granted, that every gentleman was ready and willing to receive the propoſal according to the ſcheme which had been ſo well explained. On ſitting down a profound ſilence enſued, and continued for almoſt a quarter of an hour, until the ſecretary again roſe, and made the motion in form. Thomas Broderick †, member for Stockbridge, then roſe, and after obſerving, that until the national debt was diſcharged, we could not properly ſpeaking, call ourſelves a nation, and that therefore every propoſal, tending to that great end, ought to be received and conſidered; he added, that the firſt gentleman who ſpoke, appeared to recommend this ſcheme excluſively, and the ſecretary had agreed with him; but it was to

Feb. 22d.

Objected to.

* Journals.

† Brother of lord Middleton, lord chancellor of Ireland.

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be hoped, that with a view of obtaining the beſt bargain for the nation, every other company, or any ſociety of men, might be alſo at full liberty to deliver in their propoſals. This obſervation diſconcerted and confounded the miniſters. They felt themſelves embarraſſed, and being unable to give any reaſonable argumeñts in favour of ſuch a conduct, they had recourſe to violent aſſertions and perſonal reflections. Aiſlabie, in particular, having uſed ſome unguarded expreſſions, "*that things of this nature muſt be carried on with ſpirit*," was interrupted by Sir Joſeph Jekyl, who obſerved, with much warmth, "It is this ſpirit which has undone the nation; our buſineſs is to conſider thoroughly, deliberate calmly, and judge of the whole upon reaſon, not with the ſpirit alluded to." Aiſlabie, in attempting to explain, betrayed ſo much embarraſſment, that he excited the laughter of the houſe. Walpole then roſe, and put a momentary ſtop to theſe indecorous altercations. He applauded the deſign, agreed in general to the propriety of the ſcheme, but declared that ſome parts required amendment, and a few others were unreaſonable, concluding ſtrongly in favour of receiving all propoſals, which ſeemed to be almoſt the general opinion. Lechmere replied, but inſtead of confining himſelf to the ſubject in debate, he poured forth invectives againſt the ſcheme which had been propoſed by Walpole, for the payment of the national debt, and gave the preference to that before the houſe. Walpole, irritated by this virulent attack, roſe again, and with no leſs aſperity, but with

Chapter 19. 1720.

Walpole favours an open competition.

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Period III. 1730 to 1727. with more calmneſs and ſkill, retorted on Lechmere: he proved, from papers * which he held in his hand, that the member who ſpoke laſt had unfairly repreſented facts, expoſed his deceitful mode of reaſoning, entered minutely into the ſcheme, and laid open its fallacy in many material points. Lechmere, ſtill farther provoked, again attempted to reply, but met with repeated interruptions. In vain the chairman called to order, and exclaimed, "Hear your member!" The whole houſe repeatedly cried out, "We have heard him long enough!" The chairman quitted the chair, and the ſpeaker having reſumed it, the houſe unanimouſly agreed to receive all propoſals, and to reſolve itſelf into a committee the following Wedneſday, to conſider farther of the ſubject †.

Propoſal of the bank. In conſequence of theſe reſolutions, the bank of England laid a propoſition before the commons, offering ſtill more advantageous terms, and as it was ſuppoſed that conſiderable benefits would ac-

* Among the Orford Papers, are ſeveral notes and memorandums in Sir Robert Walpole's hand writing, which contain comparative accounts of the two propoſals, and give the preference to that of the bank. Theſe are probably ſome of the papers from which he made his ſtatements to the houſe, but as they were written merely for his own private uſe, and conſiſt principally of figures, with few ſpecific references, little uſe could be made of them. The magnitude of the South Sea project, will appear from one of theſe notes.

South Sea, preſent capital - - -	11,746,844	8	10
Purchaſe of the redeemable debts - -	15,924,218	12	10½
Irredeemables - - - - -	15,057,493	13	8
And including the original capital, the whole ſtock is - - -	£.42,728,556	15	4½

† No account of this extraordinary debate is to be found in any publication:—The ſubſtance is taken from a letter of Thomas Broderick to lord chancellor Middleton, January 24th. See Correſpondence, Period III.

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true to those whose scheme was accepted, a strong competition prevailed between the bank and South Sea company, who endeavoured to outbid each other. The South Sea company had offered £.3,500,000; but the bank, having bid £.5,500,000, the company were so irritated, that at a general court, the directors were instructed to obtain the preference, *cost what it would* *, and they succeeded, by the offer of paying the enormous sum of £.7,567,500, as a gratuity to the public. This proposal being laid before the house of commons, was warmly opposed by Walpole, who spoke in favour of the bank. In vain he displayed the fallacy of the South Sea scheme, and the great difference between that and the bank, by shewing, that the company was not limited in the price they were to put on the stock made over to them; whereas the bank offered a specific sum of £.1,700 stock, for every hundred pounds in the long annuities, and the same proportion for the short annuities. In vain he urged, that it countenanced the pernicious practice of stock jobbing, by diverting the genius of the nation from trade and industry; that it held out a dangerous lure for decoying the unwary to their ruin by a false prospect of gain, and to part with the gradual profits of their labour, for imaginary wealth. In vain he insisted, that if the proposal of the South Sea company should be accepted, the rise of their stock ought to be limited. In vain he dwelt on the miseries and confusion which then

Feb. 1st.

Walpole speaks against the South Sea scheme.

* True state of the South Sea Scheme.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727. prevailed in France, from the adoption of ſimilar meaſures. In vain he argued, that as the whole ſucceſs of the ſcheme muſt chiefly depend on the riſe of the ſtock, the great principle of the project was an evil of the firſt magnitude; it was to raiſe artificially the value of the ſtock, by exciting and keeping up a general infatuation, and by promiſing dividends out of funds which would not be adequate to the purpoſe. In vain he predicted, that if the eſtabliſhment ſucceeded, the directors would become maſters of the government, form an abſolute ariſtocracy in the kingdom, and controul the reſolutions of the legiſlature; or if it did not ſucceed, the failure would cauſe a general diſcontent. He cloſed his ſpeech by obſerving, that ſuch would be the deluſive conſequences, that the public would conceive it a dream*. His arguments and his eloquence were of no avail. He was compared by his friends to Caſſandra, predicting evils which would only be believed when the event proved their reality, and only deprecated when they were felt; and he whoſe ſpeeches, in matters of finance, occupied the houſe with more than uſual attention, was now ſcarcely heard. The preference was given to the South Sea, and the bill was afterwards carried by a majority of more than 3 to 1 †. Thus paſſed this fatal act, compared by earl Cowper to the Trojan horſe, which was uſhered in and received with great pomp and acclamations of joy,

April 2.

* Political State of Europe, vol. 20. Anderſon.—Memorandums and Letters in the Walpole and Orford Papers.

† Journals.—Political State, vol. 19. p. 430.

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but was contrived for treachery and deſtruction. Walpole not only ſpoke with energy againſt the project, but gave to the public a pamphlet on the ſubject, called, "The South Sea Scheme conſidered*." Chapter 19. 1720.

At this period, Sunderland was involved in great difficulties; he had promiſed the Hanoverians to procure a repeal of the reſtraining clauſe in the act of ſettlement, but the ſucceſs which marked the efforts of his adverſaries, proved the impracticability of ſuch an attempt. The impatience of the foreign favourites to obtain the full poſſeſſion of the expected honours and emoluments, rendered them diſſatisfied with the miniſter, who while he profeſſed an inclination, avowed his want of power to gratify them. Thus expoſed to the hoſtile attacks of one party, and ill ſupported by the other, he found himſelf under the neceſſity of gaining friends to ſtrengthen his adminiſtration. The oppoſition which Walpole had given to the meaſures of government, and his great influence in the houſe of commons, where he was feebly reſiſted by Craggs, Aiſlabie and Lechmere, pointed him out as the moſt deſirable co-adjutor in the preſent ſtate of circumſtances; overtures were made to him and Townſhend, and a partial coalition took place. Townſhend and Walpole join Sunderland.

* Royal and Noble Authors—Article, Earl of Orford. Hiſtory of the South Sea Company.—Anderſon, vol. 3.—Steuart's Political Œconomy, vol. 2. p. 387.—Sir Robert Walpole's Pamphlet, called South Sea Scheme conſidered.—Sir John Blunt's Pamphlet; The true State of the South Sea Scheme.—Political State of Great Britain, vol. 19, 20, 21.—Tindal, vol. 19.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727

Walpole paymaster of the forces.

On the 6th of May, Walpole ſeconded a motion, made by Pelham, for an addreſs of thanks to the king; on the 4th of June he was appointed paymaſter general of the forces, and on the 11th, Townſhend was nominated preſident of the council. Previouſly, however, to this arrangement, Walpole had, in conjunction with the duke of Devonſhire, been the principal means of effecting a reconciliation between the king and the prince of Wales, whoſe miſunderſtanding had ariſen to ſo alarming a height, as to threaten a diſturbance of the public tranquillity. The cauſes of this miſunderſtanding have been already related, and it was ſtill farther increaſed and brought into notice, by an incident which happened at the chriſtening of one of the young princes. The king was to ſtand godfather, and the prince had deſigned his uncle, the duke of York, for the other; but, when the ceremony was performed, the duke of Newcaſtle, lord chamberlain of the houſehold, ſtood godfather, by the king's command, not as proxy for the duke of York, but in his own name. This circumſtance irritated the prince, who, at the concluſion of the ceremony, violently reproached the duke, almoſt in the king's preſence, for having ſolicited the honour in his deſpite. The king, incenſed at this indiſcreet want of reſpect, ſignified his diſpleaſure, by commanding him to remain in his apartment, under arreſt, and ſoon afterwards ordered him to quit the palace. Notice was alſo formally given, that no perſons who paid their reſpects to the prince and princeſs of Wales, would be received at court, and they

Reconciles the king and prince.

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they were deprived of their uſual guard, and of all other marks of diſtinction *. Chapter 19. 1720.

The reſentment of the king was alſo carried to ſuch an extremity, that with a view to embarraſs his ſon, he formed a reſolution of obtaining an act of parliament for compelling him to reſign, on his acceſſion to the throne, his German dominions. With this view, the opinion of the lord chancellor Parker, afterwards earl of Macclesfield, was demanded, and a conference held to conſider of the legality and expediency of the ſcheme. The anſwer given by the chancellor, fully put a ſtop to the meaſure, as inexpedient and impracticable, and liable to be followed by very dangerous conſequences †.

The honour of effecting the reconciliation in the royal family was principally due to Walpole. In a conference which he held with Sunderland, to arrange the plan of a joint adminiſtration, the miniſter, who was averſe to the union of the two courts, endeavoured to detach him from the prince, and offered him any conditions for himſelf and friends, provided he would conſent that the prince ſhould remain in diſgrace ‡. But Walpole rejected theſe overtures, and inſiſted on the reconciliati- as an indiſpenſable preliminary, before he -n, liſten to any terms of coalition. Havir- would this conceſſion, he, with the aſſiſtan- -g extorted -e of the duke

* Tindal, vol. 19. p. 169.

† The original draught of this - writing of the lord chancellor, is - eſquire.

‡ Etough.—Communic- -urious conference, in the hand - in the poſſeſſion of Thomas Aſtle, -ted by Sir Robert Walpole. of

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

of Devonſhire*, diſpoſed the prince of Wales to write a ſubmiſſive letter, in which permiſſion was requeſted to wait upon the king. He was accordingly admitted to a private conference, and on his return from the palace to Leiceſter houſe, where he had taken up his reſidence, was attended by a party of guards, and from that time the father and ſon appeared to be reconciled.

Retires to Houghton. 1720. July 28.

Although Walpole accepted the place of paymaſter of the forces, yet he did not cordially coaleſce with the adminiſtration; and on the prorogation of parliament, he took no active ſhare in the government. He paſſed the remaining part of the ſummer at Houghton, and was called to take a leading part, when the voice of the king, of the parliament, and of the nation unanimouſly ſingled him out as the perſon beſt qualified to heal the wounds, which the frenzy and frauds of the South Sea company had inflicted on the public credit.

* Tindal, vol. 19. p. 344. Grove's Lives of the Dukes of Devonſhire, vol. 2. p. 90.

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CHAPTER THE TWENTIETH:

1720—1721.

Departure of the King for Hanover.—Rise and Fall of the South Sea Stock.—National Infatuation and Despair.—Walpole's Endeavours to restore the Credit of the Company.—The King returns from Hanover.—Alarming State of Affairs.—Embarrassment of the Ministry.—Despondency of the King.—Walpole's Plan for the Restoration of Public Credit.—Discussed.

SOON after the appointment of Townshend and Walpole, the king departed for Hanover; having previously named a council of regency, composed of several high officers of state, contrary to the general expectation, which in consequence of the supposed union between the king and prince of Wales, looked to him as regent in the absence of his father. June 14. The king goes to Hanover.

At this crisis the general frenzy in favour of the South Sea speculation had risen to an enormous height. The compensation to the South Sea company, for the immediate payment of the £. 7,567,500, seemingly for no value received, was to be drawn from the profits of their scheme. These profits were to arise from, 1. The exclusive advantages of the trade, which although precarious, and depending on a peace with Spain, were stated at no less than £. 200,000 a year. 2. The allowance for the charge of management, which was to be proportioned to the augmentation of their stock. 3. The difference of receiving 5 per cent. for the money expended in purchasing the public debts, when the South Sea infatuation.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

usual interest was only 4 per cent. 4. The great addition to their wealth, from the constant rise in the price of the stock, in consequence of the artifices used to enhance its value; on which the whole success of the scheme depended *.

Artifices of the company.

The company could not fulfil its engagements with government, and pay so large a sum as between seven and eight millions, without taking advantage of the general infatuation, and availing themselves of that spirit of pecuniary enterprise, which had seized the public mind. Imaginary advantages were accordingly held forth; groundless and mysterious † reports were circulated concerning valuable acquisitions in the South Sea, and hidden treasures; dividends of ten, thirty, and even fifty per cent. were voted, which the directors knew could never be paid, and for which there was no foundation.

Exaggerated advantages.

The promoters of the scheme highly exaggerated the profits; rumours were at the same time spread, that the company, by monopolizing the fund of the whole national debt, would reduce government to the necessity of applying to them for loans,

* Steuarts Political Œconomy, vol. 2. p. 386, 387. Anderson's History of Commerce, vol. 3. p. 96.

† To these mysterious hints and fancied treasures, a ballad on the South Sea alluded:

What need have we of Indian wealth;
Or commerce with our neighbours?
Our constitution is in health,
And riches crown our labours.
Our South Sea ships have golden shrouds,
They bring us wealth 'tis granted;
But lodge their treasure in the clouds,
To hide it till it 's wanted.

Political State, vol. 20. p. 178.

which

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which would be advanced on their own terms; and it was even insinuated, that the proprietors would obtain, by the weight of their wealth, a majority in the house of commons, and make and depose ministers. The public being intoxicated with these ideas, the stock, which at the close of the books at Christmas, 1719, was only at 126, rose, at the opening of the first subscription, on the 14th of April, to above £.300, the market-price being on that day 325: in other words, the creditors of the nation made over a debt of 100 for $33\frac{1}{3}$ in South Sea stock. As the frenzy spread, and the desire of making rapid fortunes became contagious, the stock successively rose to above 1,000 per cent. at which price the books were opened for the fourth subscription the 24th of August; and this subscription, though the market-price of the established stock was below 800, was sold the same day for a premium of 30 and 40 per cent.

Chapter 20. 1720 to 1721.

Rise and fall of the stocks.

The sanguine cupidity, which marked this speculation, was not confined to the South Sea scheme: the whole nation became stock-jobbers and projectors: every day produced new proposals *. some of apparent importance and utility,

Other projects or bubbles.

* The reader will find near two hundred of these bubbles enumerated in Anderson's History of Commerce, vol. 3. p. 103. Amongst the most absurd may be mentioned, projects, For transmuting quick-silver into a malleable and fine metal.—For importing a number of large jack-asses from Spain, in order to propagate a large breed of mules;—and for trading in human hair. But the most impudent and barefaced delusion, was that of a man who advertised, that upon payment of two guineas, the subscribers should be intitled to a hundred pound share, in a project which should be disclosed in a month; the extreme folly of the public was such, that he received a thousand of these subscriptions in one day, and then went off.

others

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

others so absurd and futile, that their success was matter of surprise, and almost exceeds credibility. So prevalent was this rage, amongst persons even of the highest rank, that the prince of Wales was induced to become governor of the copper company. In vain Walpole and Compton endeavoured to dissuade him from this act of degradation, by representing, that he subjected himself to a prosecution, that he would be reviled in parliament, and that the *prince of Wales's bubble* would be hawked about in Change alley. Their remonstrances had no effect, the prince became governor, but afterwards, on receiving notice that a prosecution would be commenced against the company, withdrew his name, with a gain of £. 40,000 *.

These delusive projects received their first check from the power to which they owed their birth: The directors of the South Sea company, jealous of their success, and desirous to monopolize all the money of the speculators, obtained writs of *scire facias* against the conductors of bubbles, and thus put an end to them. But in opening the eyes of the deluded multitude, they removed the main prop of their own tottering edifice. Suspicion once excited was not to be suppressed, and the public, no longer amused by pompous declarations, and promises of dividends, which they were convinced could never be realized, declined all farther purchases of stock, which fell in less than three weeks to 400, and those who had

* Secretary Craggs to Earl Stanhope, July 12th. Correspondence, Period III.

bought

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bought at large premiums were involved in diſtreſs and ruin. Amongſt the numbers who ſuffered by theſe ſpeculations, were not only perſons of the firſt rank, but merchants and traders of every claſs, and bankers, who having advanced the monies committed to them, on the ſubſcription receipts, by their temporary ſtoppages augmented the general calamity.

Walpole's endeavours to retrieve the credit of the company.

When the public diſtreſs was arrived to a moſt alarming height, and deſpair pervaded all ranks of people, to Walpole every eye was directed, as the only perſon capable of affording aſſiſtance, under the preſſure of immediate neceſſity. When the aid of the bank became neceſſary to preſerve the South Sea company from ruin, he was called from the country, and importuned to uſe his intereſt with the governors, to perſuade them to accept a propoſal made by the South Sea company, to circulate a number of their bonds. At this awful moment the clamour of diſtreſs was irreſiſtible, and the bank, after great reluctance, ariſing from a natural dread of being involved in the ſame ruin which threatened the company, was at length induced to liſtened to the propoſals. Walpole was preſent at ſeveral conferences between the committees of the two companies, and drew up, in the firſt conference, a minute, well known afterwards by the name of the bank contract, ſpecifying the agreement of the bank, to circulate three millions of South Sea bonds for one year, on certain conditions, which were ſettled at a ſubſequent meeting.

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meeting. The report of his * interference, and the intended aid to be given by the bank, occaſioned a temporary riſe in the South Sea ſtock, but the public was in ſuch a ſtate of terror and agitation, and ſo deſperate was the ſituation of the South Sea company, that any community of intereſts between the two companies, was conſidered as fatal to both. In conſequence of this notion, ſuch a demand was made on the bank, that the governors refuſed to abide by the terms of their agreement; alledging, that it was deficient in legal validity †.

Arrival of the king.

The critical ſtate of the nation having rendered the immediate preſence of the king neceſſary, he haſtily quitted his German dominions, and landed at Margate, on the 9th of November. But his preſence had not the deſired effect. South Sea ſtock, which at the king's arrival was at 210, fell in a few days to 135 ‡. The public now looked with anxious expectation for the aſſembling of parliament, which was to meet on the 25th of November; yet ſuch were the difficulties under which the miniſtry laboured, to form a proper ſcheme for remedying the national diſtreſs, which daily increaſed, that it was farther prorogued to the 8th of December.

National deſpondency.

Nor is it a matter of wonder that the miniſtry were alarmed, and uncertain what meaſures to

* Political State.

† True State of the South Sea Scheme.—Some Conſiderations concerning the Public Funds, p. 88, 91.—Tindal.

‡ Political State.—Tindal.

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purſue. England had never experienced ſo total a deſtruction of credit, never was any country in ſo violent a paroxyſm of deſpondency and terror. The South Sea company was conſidered as the ſole cauſe of all the national misfortunes, the directors were indiſcriminately loaded with execrations, and devoted by the public voice to condign puniſhment. Thoſe who had promoted the ſcheme were involved in the ſame general deteſtation. The king, in addition to the odium of being a foreigner, and governed by foreign counſels, and of increaſing his own dominions in Germany, at the expence of England, was now reviled for having favoured the South Sea act. Well-founded ſuſpicions were entertained, that his German miniſters and miſtreſſes had received enormous largeſſes in ſtock to recommend and promote the project. Moſt of the principal miniſters of the Engliſh cabinet, Townſhend excepted, were accuſed of being implicated in the ſame ſcandalous traffic, either by themſelves or their relations, and had totally forfeited the public opinion.

Popular clamours.

Idle reports were circulated, and believed, that Sunderland * was endeavouring to prevail on the king to marry the ducheſs of Kendal, with a view to diminiſh the influence of the prince of Wales; and that he was following the example of his father with James the Second, in driving his maſter to ſuch acts of unpopularity, as might cauſe a depoſition, and eſtabliſh a republic on the ruins of

* Letters from Count Bernſdorf, and other Hanoverian miniſters, among the Townſhend Papers.

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the throne. A general outcry prevailed, that the king and miniſters had leagued with the South Sea company to dupe the nation, and that the remedy for theſe enormous evils, would be more dangerous than the diſorder itſelf.

The public diſcontents were increaſed to ſo great a height, that ſome of his Hanoverian counſellors ſuggeſted the raſheſt meaſures *. They adviſed the king to affect a reſignation of the crown to the prince of Wales, and inſinuated, that William, his great predeceſſor, had ſurmounted the factions of the time by threatening to retire, and leave the country to its fate. As a laſt and deſperate effort, he was recommended to apply to the army, to ſound the officers, many of whom it was ſaid, had declared, that rather than ſubmit to the eſtabliſhment of a commonwealth, or a popiſh competitor, they would aſſiſt to render the crown abſolute. Others were alarmed, and dreaded a miſunderſtanding between the king and the parliament; deprecated any attempt to apply to the army, oppoſed the reſignation of the crown, by inſinuating, that it was not the firſt time, that a king of England had ruined himſelf by retiring, with the hope of quelling the fury of the populace; adviſed rather, that ſecret applications ſhould be made to the Emperor and the other allies, for troops, if neceſſary, to defend his perſon againſt any rebellious attempts.

* Letters from Count Bernſdorf, and other Hanoverian miniſters among the Townſhend Papers.

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In this alarming criſis, the king was penſive and deſponding, uncertain how to act, and by whom to be directed.

The king deſpondent.

Fortunately, in this moment of ſuſpenſe and agitation, the public voice called forth Walpole, as the only man calculated to ſave the nation from impending deſtruction. In conjunction with Townſhend, he ſtood at the head of a large party, highly reſpected for their *tried* integrity; among whom the names of Cavendiſh and Ruſſel were moſt conſpicuous, who had uniformly acted with him; while the dukes of Newcaſtle, Bolton, Grafton, and many other Whigs, who had united with Sunderland, were now ready to join his ſtandard. He was attached to government by the office of paymaſter of the forces; but as he had ſcarcely taken any part in public tranſactions, he did not ſhare with adminiſtration the general odium. He had acquired great popularity by his uniform oppoſition to the South Sea act, and by having predicted the evils which were now moſt ſeverely felt.

Applies to Walpole.

Walpole now poſſeſſed the power, had he poſſeſſed the inclination, to ruin the South Sea company, the directors of which had treated him with many marks of contempt and obloquy, and to wreak his vengeance upon its principal contriver, Sunderland, who by his cabals in 1716, had driven him and Townſhend from the helm of government *. He was not ignorant that the Hanove-

* Letter from Wm. Pulteney. Correſpondence, Period III.

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rian junto were diſſatisfied with Sunderland. The promiſes which he had made of obtaining the repeal of the incapacitating clauſe, were not fulfilled, and when he was reproached for the breach of his word, he had excuſed himſelf by alledging, that Walpole, on whom he had relied for carrying the meaſure through the houſe of commons, was no longer in adminiſtration. Walpole, therefore, was ſecure of their co-operation, if he had deigned to make overtures to them; He alſo well knew, that Sunderland had principally promoted the South Sea act, for the purpoſe of ſecuring, by largeſſes of ſtock, a majority in both houſes of parliament. He was aware that the miniſter never cordially coaleſced with him and Townſhend, and that as ſoon as he had ſtrengthened his party by their means, he would obtain their diſmiſſion.

The affairs of the South Sea company were in ſo deſperate a ſituation, the popular outcry againſt the directors ſo violent, and the general diſtreſs ſo urgent, that he did not want excuſes for juſtifying a refuſal to undertake this arduous buſineſs.

But Walpole was not of a vindictive temper; he cheerfully ſacrificed his own reſentment, and though fully ſatisfied of Sunderland's inſidious and overbearing character, came forward to aſſiſt in relieving his country from the general calamity. He was fully aware of the numerous embarraſſments which oppoſed his ſucceſs. To him was enjoined the difficult taſk of preſerving the honour of the king, which ſeemed contaminated by the notorious

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avarice and venality of his German followers; of counteracting the unpopularity of the miniſter, by whoſe authority and influence the South Sea bill had been framed and carried; of ſatisfying the ſufferers, who loudly appealed for indemnification, without detriment to the public; of drawing the difficult line between too much lenity and too much ſeverity; of reconciling the people to the king, and of calming the diſcontents, which threatened tumults and inſurrections. He did not, however, ſhrink from the trial; but engaged in the taſk with that ardour and aſſiduity which marked his character. After examining various propoſals which were ſubmitted to his conſideration, he adopted a plan for ingrafting a certain portion of the South Sea ſtock in the bank and Eaſt India company; the firſt hint of which was ſuggeſted by Jacombe *, under ſecretary at war. Having amended the ſcheme in ſeveral inſtances, and prepared it for public deliberation, he referred it to the king, in a letter †, in which, after expreſſing his ſtrong ſenſe of the difficulties which he had to encounter, he declared, that he engaged in the undertaking ſolely in obedience to his majeſty's command. The king and cabinet having ratified the ſcheme, and the monied part of the nation having ſanctioned it with their approbation, he came prepared to ſubmit it to parliament.

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Walpole forms a plan for the reſtoration of public credit.

* Jacombe's letter to Robert Walpole, October 11. Correſpondence, Period III. and Walpole's ſpeech, at the end of this chapter.

† Correſpondence, Period III.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727. Restores public confidence.

The moment in which it was publicly known that Walpole, in conjunction with Townshend, was employed on a scheme for the restoration of public credit, a new spirit and resolution seemed to be infused into the nation. The country revived from its late despondency; and his ability for finance was so thoroughly appreciated, that a proposal which he made to the minister on the 19th of November, being agreed to, had such an instantaneous effect, as again to raise the stock from 125 to 200 *.

On the meeting of parliament, Walpole had many difficulties to surmount, before he could venture to lay his plan before the house. One of the greatest arose from the zeal of those who were more remarkable for integrity than judgment, and whose indignation excited them to adopt such violent resolutions, as without producing any essential benefit to the sufferers, would have occasioned a total destruction of public credit.

Proceedings in parliament. December 8.

This vindictive spirit displayed itself in the first debate which took place on the king's speech. Pulteney having moved for an address, assuring his majesty that the commons would at this critical juncture proceed with all possible care, prudence, and temper, to inquire into the causes of those misfortunes, and apply the proper remedies for restoring and fixing public credit upon such solid foundations, as might effectually give ease and quiet to the minds of his majesty's subjects: Ship-

* Letter from William Pulteney to Daniel Pulteney, Correspondence, Period III.—Political State, 1720.

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pen propoſed an addition, after the words, "for reſtoring public credit," "as far as it is conſiſtent with the honour of parliament, the intereſts of the nation, and the principles of juſtice." This amendment was warmly ſeconded; and occaſioned a violent debate, in the courſe of which the directors were ſtigmatiſed with every opprobrious appellation which language could ſuggeſt. Several of the members urged the moſt bitter invectives againſt the act for veſting too large powers in a ſet of men, whom they called miſcreants, the ſcum of the people *. Sir Joſeph Jekyll hoped that all the directors were not equally culpable, but ſure he was, that ſome who were not directors were highly criminal; and truſted that a Britiſh parliament would not want a vindictive power to puniſh great national crimes. Lord Moleſworth owned that there were no laws in being to puniſh the South Sea directors, but contended that the example of the Romans ought to be followed, who, becauſe their laws were defective, in not having provided a penalty for parricide, made one to puniſh the crime after it had been committed, and adjudged the guilty wretch to be ſewed up in a ſack and thrown alive into the Tyber. He concluded, "that as he looked upon the contrivers and executors of the South Sea ſcheme, as the parricides of their country, he ſhould be ſatisfied to ſee them undergo the ſame fate †."

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* T. Brodrick's Letters. Correſpondence.
† Political State.—Chandler.

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In the height of this altercation, Walpole remarked, that it was imprudent to begin the seſſions with irritating inquiries before they examined the cauſe; that if the city of London was on fire, all wiſe men would ruſh forwards to extinguiſh the flames, and prevent the ſpreading of the conflagration, before they inquired who were the incendiaries. In like manner, public credit having received a moſt dangerous wound, and being ſtill in a bleeding condition, they ought to apply a ſpeedy remedy; and afterwards they might inquire into the cauſe of the calamity. "For my part," he continued, "I never approved the South Sea ſcheme, and am ſenſible it has done a great deal of miſchief: but ſince it cannot be undone, it is the duty of all good men, to aſſiſt in retrieving it: With this view, I have already beſtowed ſome thoughts on a propoſal to reſtore public credit, which, in a proper time, I will ſubmit to the wiſdom of parliament *." This mild exhortation calmed the houſe, and the amendment was negatived by a majority of 261 againſt 103 †. But although he carried his point at this time, yet on the next day, the temper of the houſe appearing more inclined to ſeverity, he did not attempt to oppoſe the prevailing ſpirit; and an addition to the addreſs, "for puniſhing the authors of our preſent calamities," being moved, was carried without a diviſion.

In theſe debates, it appeared, for the the firſt time, that party had no concern; Whigs and Tories

* Political State, vol. 20. p. 561. † Journals.

could

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could not be diſtinguiſhed by their votes. Theſe partialities were ſuſpended, and almoſt annihilated by various other paſſions, which produced numberleſs intrigues. Many of the commons were ſincerely touched with the public calamities, or moved by their own private loſſes: others, diſſatisfied with the miniſtry and court, were pleaſed to have an opportunity of covering their revenge, with the ſpecious pretence of juſtice and the public good: ſome had in view, by their loud and bitter complaints, to increaſe their own importance, or draw the attention of the oppoſite party; others, engaged in the ſecret practices of the South Sea, hoped, by an affected ſeverity, to prevent ſuſpicion. A few there were, who concealed, under the appearance of zeal and indignation, their devotion to ſome of the principal managers*. The party hoſtile to the eſtabliſhed government took advantage of the public indignation, and excited the moſt violent clamours againſt thoſe who, like Walpole, oppoſed extreme ſeverity, and laboured to mitigate the ſpirit of revenge. Their views were directed to increaſe confuſion and inflame diſcontent, with the hopes of procuring a majority of the diſaffected in the new parliament, and by means of popular inſurrections, to haſten the reſtoration of the Pretender, which they now looked up to as a certain event. Such were the views and temper of parties in the houſe of commons, which Walpole had to encounter, and ſuch was the ſpirit of diſcontent

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* Tindal, vol. 19. p. 379.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727. which he had to allay, before he could carry any ſcheme into execution; and yet it was in the midſt of theſe diſcordant ſentiments, and petulant oppoſition, that by means of conſummate prudence and management, he gradually brought the houſe to reaſon and diſcretion.

A committee was appointed, on the 9th of December, to take into conſideration the ſtate of public credit on the 15th; but on the 12th it was moved, that the directors ſhould forthwith lay before the houſe, an account of all their proceedings; this motion being warmly ſeconded and ſupported, was oppoſed by Craggs, Lord Hinchinbroke, and the two Walpoles. The previous queſtion being called for againſt this delay, Sir Richard Steele argued, that this nation, which two years ago poſſeſſed more weight and greater credit than any other nation in Europe, was reduced to its preſent diſtreſs by a few cyphering cits, a ſpecies of men of equal capacity, in all reſpects, (that of cheating a deluded people only excepted) with thoſe animals who ſaved the capitol, who were now to be ſcreened by thoſe of greater figure, for what reaſon they beſt knew, others were at liberty to judge. In reply to an argument againſt the queſtion, that this vindictive juſtice ſo much contended for, would not be effectual, becauſe it would be impracticable to procure a true account of the delinquents' eſtates, another urged, that all the laws againſt bankrupts enacted into one againſt the directors (for ſo he, ſhould call them, as a word that conveyed more obloquy than any other expreſſion) would in his opinion,

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opinion, attain the end propoſed*. Horace Walpole, in ſpeaking for the previous queſtion, confeſſed that the South Sea ſcheme was weak in its projection, villanous in its execution, and calamitous in its end; but that, in his opinion, they ought to begin with applying a remedy to the evil. Walpole himſelf did not attempt to defend the directors; but ſaid, "that as he had already declared, he had paſſed ſome time upon a propoſal for that purpoſe; he was, however, apprehenſive, that if they went on in a warm, paſſionate way, the ſcheme might be rendered altogether impracticable: and therefore, he deſired that the houſe would proceed regularly and calmly, left by running precipitately into odious inquiries, they ſhould exaſperate the diſtemper to ſuch a degree, as to render all remedies ineffectual†."

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In reply to this exhortation to mildneſs, Sir Joſeph Jekyll enforced, with uncommon animation, the neceſſity of an immediate inquiry. He urged, that it was abſurd to attempt a cure before they were acquainted with the diſorder; and was convinced that the wiſdom of the houſe would not want ſchemes to apply proper remedies. Walpole, finding that this ſpeech had made a deep impreſſion, did not inſiſt on the previous queſtion, and ſuffered the original motion to paſs without a diviſion. Several reſolutions were accordingly car-

Prudence of Walpole.

* T. Brodrick to Lord Middleton, December 13.—Correſpondence, Period III.

† Political State for December 1720.—Chandler,

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ried, ordering the directors to deliver in an account of all their proceedings in relation to the execution of the South Sea act.

So great was the impatience of the commons, that on the 14th, complaints were made of the dilatorineſs of the directors; on the 15th ſome of their accounts were laid before the houſe; on the 19th, Sir Joſeph Jekyll moved for a ſelect committee to inquire into all the proceedings relating to the South Sea act. The motion, however, was dropped, at the repreſentation of Walpole, who obſerved, as on a former occaſion, that public credit being in a bleeding condition, a ſpeedy remedy ſhould be applied, and therefore, any delay would be highly dangerous. This was immediately followed by invectives againſt ſtock-jobbers, to whoſe arts the public calamity was imputed; and a vote was paſſed, without any oppoſition, "that nothing can tend more to the eſtabliſhment of public credit, than preventing the infamous practice of ſtock-jobbing *."

After paſſing this vote, which was on the following day formed into a bill, Walpole ventured to ſound the temper of the houſe, in regard to the main queſtion on which his ſcheme was founded. It was to facilitate the reduction of the national debt, by retaining that part of the South Sea act which would aſſiſt in promoting this end, and his ſpeeches and conduct were uniformly

* Political State for December.

directed

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directed to enforce this beneficial purpoſe. But a miſtaken principle of juſtice and compaſſion ſeemed likely to prevent the ſucceſs of his ſcheme, or at leaſt retard its effects. With a view to alleviate the ſufferers, it was propoſed among other things, to annul the contracts made by the South Sea company, to declare the ſubſcriptions void, and to reſtore the proprietors of the public debts to their former ſtate, or in other words, to leave the debt of the nation on the ſame footing on which it ſtood before the opening of the ſecond South Sea ſubſcription. To enforce this propoſal, petitions were preſented to the houſe from ſeveral proprietors of the irredeemable debts and lottery tickets, "praying that their caſe might be taken into ſerious conſideration, and that they might be defended in their juſt rights againſt the illegal proceedings of the South Sea company, by forcing them to take ſtock for their debts, at a much higher rate than it would ſell for; and admit them to be heard either by themſelves or council, or grant them ſuch other relief, as ſhould be thought fit." This petition was warmly ſupported by Sir Joſeph Jekyll, under the patriotic pretence of aſſerting public faith, equity, and juſtice, which had been notoriouſly violated by the directors.

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In oppoſition to this ſpecious, but impolitic propoſal, Walpole explained the views with which the South Sea act was framed, which were to promote the landed and trading intereſt of the nation, by leſſening the incumbrances, and reducing them to a method of being diſcharged in a few years. This

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This ſalutary benefit would not, he added, be effected, unleſs a way had been found to make the annuities for long terms redeemable, which had been happily effected by the South Sea ſcheme, without a breach of parliamentary faith; and if they could now unravel what had been done, they ſhould not only ruin the South Sea company, but, inſtead of alleviating, aggravate the preſent misfortunes; and he added, that if any injuſtice was done to the ſubſcribers, they were at liberty to ſeek relief by law *. He then claimed the attention of the committee; and ſaid, "That (as he had before hinted) he had prepared a ſcheme for reſtoring public credit, but that the execution of it depending upon a poſition which had been laid down as fundamental, he thought it proper, before he opened his ſcheme, to be informed, whether he might rely on the main foundation, that *the ſubſcriptions of public debts and incumbrances, money ſubſcriptions, and other contracts made with the South Sea company, ſhould remain in the preſent ſtate?*" This was the cauſe of two long and violent debates, after which it paſſed in the affirmative, by a majority of 232 againſt 88, with a reſervation in theſe words, "unleſs altered for the eaſe and relief of the proprietors, by a general court of the South Sea company, or ſet aſide by due courſe of law †."

Dec. 19 and 30.

Walpole lays his ſcheme before the houſe. Dec. 21.

Having thus gradually ſmoothed his way, and obtained the avowal of the commons, that the

* Political State, vol. 20. p. 586.

† Journals.—Chandler.—Political State.—Brodrick's Letters. Correſpondence, Period III.

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ſubſcriptions of the proprietors of the debt ſhould be conſidered as valid, he brought forward his ſcheme; it was, in ſubſtance, to engraft nine millions of ſtock into the bank of England, and the ſame ſum into the Eaſt India company, on certain conditions; the remaining twenty millions were to be left to the South Sea company. In his ſpeech, recommending this plan, Walpole ſtudiouſly avoided the introduction of any ſpeculative topics, or any aſſertions which were not proved by papers before the houſe: He promiſed, and frequently repeated, that he founded his calculations on the veracity of thoſe ſtatements*, and by his prudence in that reſpect, ſilenced many cavils which muſt neceſſarily have ariſen from aſſertions leſs cloſely connected with obvious and attainable proof. After a few objections, made by Hutcheſon, and ſome other members, it was ordered, that propoſals ſhould be received from the bank of England, and the Eaſt India company, for reſtoring public credit. It met however with a warm, but fruitleſs oppoſition from the three companies, becauſe neither derived from it any peculiar advantage; their propoſals were preſented to the houſe, and a bill framed accordingly. In its paſſage through the commons, it was in ſome reſpects altered and amended; but the principal features were preſerved. The chief management of the buſineſs was committed to Walpole, and though it

* Thomas Brodrick to Lord Middleton, 22d. December. Correſpondence, Period III.

was

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

was violently * oppoſed in its progreſs, yet his prudence and diſcretion either gave way to the general clamour, or ſubmitted to various amendments, or his weight and eloquence, aided by the influence of government, obtained a majority in its favour: it paſſed the houſe of lords, and received the royal aſſent.

Feb. 22.

Paſſes the two houſes.

March 22.

The good effects of Walpole's ſcheme were counteracted by the petulant oppoſition of the advocates for indiſcriminate ſeverity, and many unjuſt ſarcaſms and violent invectives were thrown out againſt its author. Amongſt others, Shippen, the inflexible oppoſer of lenient meaſures, obſerved, that the houſe had hitherto done nothing towards the reſtoration of public credit: that indeed, a member of great parts and abilities had, at firſt, propoſed a ſcheme for that purpoſe; but that inſtead of proving an effectual remedy, it appeared at laſt to be a mere palliative, which had rather inflamed than alleviated the diſtemper. That by this time the whole injured nation called aloud for vengeance; and if they neglected to hear the voice of the people, it would look as if they had a mind to provoke them to do themſelves juſtice †. It was ever his opinion, that the only effectual means to reſtore credit, was to call thoſe to a ſtrict account, who had ruined it; and in particular all ſuch as had applied any part of the public money, intruſted

April 25.

* January 3, on the firſt reading, 165 to 118.—January 5, on the motion for adjourning the report, 153 againſt 140.—January 10, againſt re-committing it, 267 to 134.—February 7, on the ſecond reading, 237 to 139.

† Chandler.

in

in their hands, in ſtock-jobbing, and had raiſed vaſt fortunes by robbing the nation. He then moved, that an inquiry ſhould be made what public money had been employed in ſtock-jobbing, or in the purchaſe of annuities, or other parliamentary ſecurities, by any officer of the revenue, to their own private advantage, ſince the firſt day of December, 1719. Sir William Wyndham ſeconded the motion, and after animadverting on the profuſe expenditure of the public money, and allowance of arrears, due to foreign troops, which had been taken into Britiſh pay, moved for copies to be laid before the houſe, of the ſeveral warrants and ſign manuals, by virtue of which the late commiſſioners appointed to examine the debts of the army, iſſued any certificates. Chapter 20. 1720 to 1721.

Walpole having expreſſed his ſurpriſe and ſtated his objection to this motion; Lechmere obſerved, that he was neither for or againſt it, but he would freely tell the gentleman who oppoſed it, that while the nation was under the preſſure of heavy debts, he muſt expect that many motions would be made, for the purpoſe of finding out methods to eaſe the public burdens. That as that gentleman was now in a higher poſt than formerly, a great deal more was expected from him; the rather, becauſe the ſcheme which he had propoſed at the beginning of the ſeſſion, for raiſing the ſtocks, and reſtoring public credit, had not had the deſired effect. Walpole, moved at this invective, could not contain his indignation. "It is known, he replied, that I ever was againſt the South Sea ſcheme, and have done all

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all that lay in my power to hinder its taking place; but when the miſchief was done, and things were brought to ſuch extremities, I thought it my duty, and therefore was willing to try the beſt method I could think of to extricate the nation out of its difficulties: I do not pretend *to work miracles*, but only to uſe my utmoſt endeavours towards retrieving the late misfortunes: with this honeſt intention I promoted a ſcheme which had been laid before me *, and which appeared the moſt plauſible of any then propoſed, for reſtoring public credit: It cannot be denied, that while that ſcheme was purſued, it did ſome good, and kept up the price of ſtocks; and that they have fallen ſince it has been laid aſide: I never intended however to raiſe ſtocks above their intrinſic value, for that would bring us again into the ſame unhappy circumſtances which their extraordinary riſe had before occaſioned." He then lamented the ill diſpoſition of ſome perſons who, inſtead of concurring with others in remedying the preſent diſtempers, uſed all poſſible means to irritate the minds of the people: and concluded with a motion for appointing a day to conſider the ſtate of public credit, which was unanimouſly agreed to.

Although the engrafting ſcheme was not carried into execution, and was ſuperſeded by † the bill which paſſed at the cloſe of the ſeſſion for reſtoring public credit, yet it produced a beneficial effect, by

* By Jacombe, under ſecretary at war. See note, p. 241.

† Journals.—Political State for April 1721, and Chandler.

calming

calming the general diſcontents, and inducing the proprietors of the national debt, who had ſeverely ſuffered from the South Sea infatuation, to form hopes of relief from the efforts of parliament. Chapter 20. 1720 to 1721.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIRST:

1721.

Public Indignation againſt the Directors.—Proceedings in Parliament.—Report of the Committee of Secrecy.—Rigorous Treatment of the Directors.—Bill of Pains and Penalties.—Moderation of Walpole.—Defends Charles Stanhope.—Saves Sunderland.—Promotes the Bill for reſtoring Public Credit.—Advantages finally derived from the South Sea Scheme.—Arrears of the Civil Liſt paid.—Controverſy concerning the Bank Contract.

DURING the period in which this ſcheme was carrying through both houſes of parliament, the loudeſt and moſt violent clamours were excited as well againſt the directors, as againſt the miniſters who had promoted the South Sea act, which was conſidered as the ſole cauſe of the national diſtreſs. The general infatuation in favour of the South Sea company was forgotten; and the frenzy of ſtock-jobbing was not taken into conſideration. All the managers were indiſcriminately involved in the ſame guilt; the very name of a director was ſynonimous with every ſpecies of fraud and villany. Petitions from counties, cities, and boroughs, in all parts of the kingdom, were preſented to the houſe, crying for juſtice due to an injured nation againſt the villany of theſe peculators, Indignation of the public.

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lators, and the ſufferers looked up for indemnification from the confiſcation of their property, or for vengeance in the puniſhment of their guilt. All thoſe, who like Walpole oppoſed extreme ſeverity and indiſcriminate puniſhment, were expoſed to repeated inſults and virulent invectives; they were devoted, both in anonymous letters and public writings, to the ſpeedy vengeance of a much injured people.

Parliamentary proceedings.

The popular frenzy ſeized parliament, and influenced their proceedings. On the receſs, the houſe was divided into two parties; the one for applying an immediate remedy to the diſtreſs occaſioned by the South Sea act, was ſuperior to that for inquiring into the cauſes of the national misfortunes, and puniſhing the authors, as the moſt effectual means of redreſſing them. To the preponderant party Walpole inclined; and his opinion had great weight in inclining the deciſions of

April 30.

the houſe to the lenient ſide. But at the meeting after the receſs, it immediately appeared that the vindictive party had gained the aſcendancy; and that ſtrong cenſures were thrown out againſt ſome of the leading members of adminiſtration. Walpole ſoon perceived the general inclination of the houſe; conſcious that all attempts, either to perſuade or oppoſe, could only ſerve to inflame their reſentment, and deriving a warning from the intemperate heat of ſecretary Craggs, he took but a ſmall ſhare in the debates which related to the inquiries into the South Sea project, and the conduct of the directors.

A committee

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A committee of ſecrecy being appointed by the commons to examine all the books, papers, and proceedings relating to the execution of the South Sea act, the members * were choſen from the moſt violent of thoſe who were advocates for indiſcriminate and unrelenting ſeverity. Alarmed at theſe proceedings, Knight, caſhier of the company, who alone was privy to all the ſecret tranſactions, eſcaped from England, ſoon after his firſt examination, carrying with him the regiſter called the green book, and it was generally ſuſpected, that he took this ſtep with the connivance of government. The committee having reported this event to the houſe, the commons ordered the doors to be locked, and the keys laid on the table. General Roſs then ſtated, that the committee had diſcovered, "a train of the deepeſt villany and fraud hell ever contrived to ruin a nation, which, in due time, ſhould be laid before the houſe." In conſequence of this vague aſſertion, four of the directors, who were members, were expelled the houſe, and taken into cuſtody. The other directors

Chapter 21. 1721. Committee of ſecrecy.

Jan. 23.

Rigorous proceedings againſt the directors.

* This Committee was compoſed of the following perſons:

Thomas Brodrick, chairman.

Archibald Hutcheſon,	Lord Moleſworth,
Sir Joſeph Jekyll,	Col. Strangways,
Edward Wortley,	William Sloper,
Sir Thomas Pengelly.	N. Lechmere,
William Clayton,	General Roſs,
Edward Jefferies,	Hon. Dixie Windſor.

The heat and violence of Brodrick in this inquiry, are ſufficiently ſhewn in his letters: (See Correſpondence, Period III.) And the vindictive and acrimonious ſpirit of the majority of the committee is apparent in their ſpeeches and motions on the ſubject, in Chandler, the Political State of Great Britain, &c.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727. Jan. 25. shared the same fate; all their books, papers, and effects were seized, and the royal assent was given to a bill, for restraining them from leaving the kingdom, discovering their estates, and disqualifying them for holding offices in any of the companies.

16 February. Report of the committee. If any thing could justify these extraordinary acts of rigor, it was the report of the secret committee, which when presented to the house, exposed a scene of fraud and iniquity almost unparalleled in the annals of history. The committee stated that their inquiry had been attended with numerous embarrassments and difficulties; that in the different books were made false and fictitious entries; entries with blanks, erasures, and alterations, and in some, the leaves were torn out. Some books had been destroyed, others secreted.

Before the South Sea bill was passed, and with a view to promote it, the directors, to whom the secret management was principally intrusted, had disposed of a fictitious stock of £. 574,000; this stock was noted as sold at several days, and at various prices, from 150 to 325 per cent. amounting in the whole to £. 1,259,325, it was to be esteemed as holden of the company, for the benefit of the pretended purchasers, though no mutual agreement was then made for the delivery or acceptance of the stock at any stated time; no money was deposited, and no security given for the payment. By this contrivance, no loss could have been sustained, if the stock should fall, and the gain would be received, if it should rise.

3 As

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As this fictitious ſtock was deſigned for promoting the bill, the ſub and deputy governors, Sir John Blunt, Mr. Gibbon, Mr. Cheſter, Mr. Holditch, and Mr. Knight, the caſhier, had the chief diſpoſal of it, and it was diſtributed as follows:

	£.
To the earl of Sunderland, at the requeſt of Mr. Craggs, ſenior - - -	50,000
The dutcheſs of Kendal - - - - -	10,000
The counteſs of Platen - - - - - -	10,000
Her two nieces - - - - - - - -	10,000
Mr. Craggs, ſenior - - - - - - -	30,000
Charles Stanhope, eſquire - - - -	10,000
The ſword blade company - - - -	50,000

It alſo appeared, that Charles Stanhope had received a difference of £. 250,000, through the hands of Sir George Caſwal and Co. but that his name had been partly eraſed from their books, and altered to *Stangape*. That Aiſlabie, chancellor of the exchequer, had an account with Turner, Caſwal, and Co. to the amount of £. 794,451, and that he had adviſed the company to make the ſecond ſubſciption £. 1,500,000, inſtead of a million, by their own authority, and without any warrant. That of the third ſubſcription, Aiſlabie's liſt amounted to £. 70,000, Sunderland's to £. 160,000, Craggs's to £. 659,000, and Stanhope's to £. 47,000. That on the pawned ſtock which had been ſold, there was, by the means of Mr. Knight, a deficiency of £. 400,000. This report was ſucceeded by ſix others, leſs important; at the end of the laſt, the committee declared that

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the abſence of Knight, who had been principally, and often ſolely intruſted, put a period to their inquiries into this black and deſtructive affair.

Farther proceedings.

In conſequence of the firſt of theſe reports, the houſe paſſed ſeveral ſtrong reſolutions, after which a bill was brought in for the relief of the ſufferers by the South Sea company, the title of which, on the third reading, was changed into a bill for raiſing money on the eſtates of the ſub, and deputy governors, directors, caſhier, deputy caſhier, and accountant of the South Sea company, and of Mr. Aiſlabie and Mr. Craggs, towards making good the damages ſuſtained by the company, and for diſabling ſuch of thoſe perſons as were living, to hold any place, or ſit in parliament for the future. In conſequence of theſe reſolutions, the greater part of the eſtates belonging to the directors, and to other perſons mentioned therein, were confiſcated to a very large amount, and applied towards diſcharging the debts of the company. The eſtates of the directors alone were valued at £. 2,014,123, the allowance made to them was £. 354,600, the confiſcation therefore, amounted to £. 1,659,523. Yet theſe enormous forfeitures did not ſatisfy the unrelenting advocates for extreme ſeverity, many of whom expected nothing leſs than confiſcation of all * their property, and

* Inſult was ſometimes added to confiſcation. On the motion for allowing Grigſby £. 10,000, whoſe eſtate was valued at £. 31,687, a member obſerved, that ſince that upſtart had once been ſo prodigally vain as to bid his coachman feed his horſes with gold, no doubt he could feed on it himſelf; and therefore he moved that he might be allowed as much gold as he could eat, and that the reſt of his eſtate might go toward the relief of the ſufferers. Political State. June 1721.

ſeveral

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several were dissatisfied, because the punishment of death was not inflicted *. Chapter 21. 1721.

An eminent historian has justly remarked, that "the equity of modern times must condemn the arbitrary proceedings which disgraced the cause of justice, by introducing a bill of pains and penalties, a retroactive statute, to punish offences which did not exist." "Against a bill of pains and penalties," he observes, "it is the common right of every subject to be heard by his council at the bar; they prayed to be heard, their prayer was refused; and their oppressors, who required no evidence, would listen to no defence †." Remarks on the occasion.

Walpole however is exempted from this just censure: we have already mentioned his endeavours to stem the torrent of parliamentary vengeance, and to incline the sentiments of the house to terms of moderation; and although the current of opinion ran violently against lenient measures, yet he did not shrink from avowing his sentiments, when any flagrant act of injustice was going to be committed. Thus, when a motion was made for declaring the estates of Craggs liable to the same forfeitures as those of the directors, and his two sons in law, who were both members of the house, requested to be heard by counsel in right of their wives, as daughters of the deceased; he strenuously spoke in their favour. For his interposition he incurred censure, and was ironically complimented by Lechmere, as being fully capa- Moderation of Walpole.

* Saint John Brodrick to Lord Middleton, May 24. Correspondence.

† Gibbon's Memoirs, p. 11.

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ble to adviſe them, and to ſerve them as counſel; an office he had already performed for ſo many others. Walpole finding that all appeals to reaſon and equity were ineffectual, and not willing to irritate the houſe, prudently returned no anſwer to this ſarcaſm, and the requeſt was withdrawn.

At another period, when the directors prayed alſo to be heard by counſel, Walpole, though he avowed himſelf conſcious that any thing which might be interpreted in favour of a South Sea director, would be very ill heard, and ſubject the ſpeaker to great diſadvantages; yet he defended their petition upon the juſt and obvious principle, that no criminal, however great, ought to be condemned unheard, or deprived of any advantage in making his defence.

Defends Charles Stanhope.

The part of theſe tranſactions which involved Walpole in the greateſt embarraſſment, was the neceſſity of defending the miniſtry againſt thoſe attacks, to which their conduct had laid them open, but which, had they been too cloſely ſcrutiniſed, would have occaſioned diſcoveries extremely dangerous in the irritated ſtate of the public mind, and produced changes portentous of the greateſt miſchief. Stanhope had been charged by the report of the committee, with having taken, through Knight, £.10,000 ſtock, without any valuable conſideration, and with having bought, through Turner and company, £.50,000 ſtock, at a very low price, by the difference of which he had gained £.250,000. In proof of theſe averments, the examinations of Sir John Blunt, Holditch,

Feb. 28.

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ditch, Sawbridge, and Henry Blunt, were read, and they were interrogated at the bar, but their teſtimony rather detracted from, than ſtrengthened their former depoſitions; and it was apparent as to the £. 10,000, that Stanhope had received no ſtock without a valuable conſideration, and that as to the £. 50,000, his name had been uſed without his privity or conſent. Yet the houſe was ſo little ſatisfied with this exculpation, that though Walpole and his brother Horace exerted great ability in his defence, he was acquitted by a majority of three only, 180 to 177 *. Chapter 21. 1721.

Aiſlabie's caſe was ſo flagrant, and his criminality verified by ſo many proofs, that, on his firſt accuſation in the houſe of commons, neither Walpole or his friends attempted to defend him; he was expelled the houſe, and committed to the Tower. But when the bill was brought in for ſubjecting his eſtates in common with thoſe of the South Sea directors, Walpole obſerved, that impeaching, not billing miniſters, was the parliamentary rule of our anceſtors, treated the bill as a bill of attainder, and made a ſtrong appeal to the compaſſion of the houſe, in favour of his wife and family †. Failing in theſe efforts, he moved, that ſuch parts of his property as had been in his poſſeſſion towards the end of the year 1719, before the South Sea bill was brought in, might be exempted from confiſcation. This was, however, March 8. Aiſlabie expelled.

* Thomas Brodrick to Lord Middleton, March 7. Correſpondence, Period III.—Political State.—Chandler.—Tindal.

† Brodrick's Letters. Correſpondence.

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over-ruled, and it was finally carried, that all the eſtate he poſſeſſed on the 20th of October 1718, ſhould be allowed to him and his family.

Walpole ſaves Sunderland.

To preſerve Sunderland from the ſame cenſure which had involved Aiſlabie, and would have involved ſecretary Craggs, had he lived, was the great object of the court. But as he was accuſed by the ſecret committee of having received, through Knight, £. 50,000 fictitious ſtock, without having made any payment, or given any ſecurity; and as the parliament had in many inſtances taken preſumption for guilt, and appearances for realities, it was no eaſy matter to turn the ſenſe of the houſe in favour of the miniſter, who ſat at the head of the treaſury when the South Sea act was framed and carried. Under theſe inauſpicious circumſtances, Walpole, however, obtained the acquittal of Sunderland.

That part of the report which related to lord Sunderland, being propoſed to be taken into conſideration, was adjourned till the 15th of March, on the preſſing inſtances of Walpole *, as neceſſary for the farther information of the houſe, that ſeveral witneſſes who had been examined by the committee, ſhould be re-examined at the bar; as they might vary in their depoſitions, to give a different explanation to the words which they had made uſe of in their examination. Having obtained this point, the object of which was to delay the buſineſs, for the purpoſe of gaining over ſeveral of the Whigs, he repreſented to them, that

* Brodrick's Letters. Correſpondence.

if

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if they gave their votes againſt Sunderland, and he was diſgracefully removed, their cauſe would ſuffer, and the Tories be called into power. Theſe repreſentations had a due weight, and brought over many to his purpoſe. The proof of the fact reſted principally on the aſſertion of Knight, as given on the oath of Sir John Blunt, who as preſident of the company, could not be ſuppoſed ignorant of the tranſaction; and who depoſed to his having heard the particular declarations of Knight, that ſuch ſtock had been taken, and a note of acknowledgment given by Sunderland. Of five directors examined at the bar, one could only affirm, that he was alone with Knight, when it was communicated to him; and two others acknowledged that Knight had informed them of the ſaid circumſtances in preſence of Sir John Blunt, but could not poſitively aſcertain whether he was within hearing. Walpole, who had in a previous debate on the caſe of Charles Stanhope endeavoured to weaken the evidence, and illiberally expoſed the character of Sir John Blunt as a fraudulent projector, purſued the ſame line of conduct with increaſed aſperity. He declared himſelf authoriſed by Sunderland to deny the fact, and to avow that no ſuch ſtock had been taken in his name, and no ſuch note given, and reprobated the idea, that ſuch hearſay evidence ſhould operate to the ruin of the fortune and character of any man.

To Walpole Sunderland was indebted for his acquittal. His perſonal weight, his authoritative and perſuaſive eloquence, were effectually employed on this

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

this occaſion, and, aided by the influence of government, met with ſucceſs. The miniſter was acquitted by a majority of 61 votes, 233 againſt 172 *.

Having obtained the acquittal of Sunderland, and ſecured the continuance of the Whig adminiſtration, of which he ſoon became the head, the great object of Walpole was directed to promote the reſtoration of public credit, which was in danger of being diminiſhed, if not overturned, by the violent proceedings of the commons. In this delicate buſineſs he acted with his uſual prudence, and though he could not in all inſtances prevent the adoption of meaſures which he did not approve, yet he moſtly contrived either to delay their execution, or to mitigate their effect by various expedients.

Addreſs of the commons.

As chairman of the committee, he drew up the addreſs of the commons to the king; it repreſented the ſtate of public credit, and recited perſpicuouſly, in a full though ſummary manner, the confuſion and miſchiefs which were derived from the execution of the fatal South Sea ſcheme: It deſcribed the cauſe of thoſe miſchiefs, explained the difficulty of applying proper remedies, and

* Chandler.—Although the public voice, notwithſtanding his acquittal by ſo large a majority, criminated Sunderland; yet ſeveral extenuations may be urged in his favour. For it appears from private documents which have caſually fallen under my inſpection, that ſo early as July, he had refuſed to recommend to the directors any more liſts for ſubſcriptions; that he did nor at leaſt enrich himſelf or his friends; that he expreſſed great ſatisfaction, that neither himſelf or his friends had ſold out any South Sea ſtock, as he would not have profited of the public calamity.—Letters from Eckerſal and Drummond to Daniel Pulteney, Correſpondence, Period III.

mentioned

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mentioned certain resolutions which had passed for re-establishing public credit, remitting £.4,156,341, to the South Sea company, dividing all the remaining capital stock among the proprietors, and preventing stock-jobbing. These resolutions were made the foundation of an act that passed under the title of a bill for making several provisions to restore the public credit, which suffered by the frauds and mismanagements of the late South Sea directors and others. Chapter 21. 1721. Bill for restoring public credit.

In the passage of the bill through the commons, a daring attempt was made to obtain its rejection, or to frustrate its effects. Though the general disposition of Walpole was mild and temperate, yet in this instance, when threats were employed to awe the legislative body into a compliance, he stood forth the supporter of parliamentary freedom. On the day in which the bill for restoring public credit was to be read a second time, the lobby of the house of commons, and the adjacent places, were filled with a numerous body of proprietors of the short annuities and other redeemable debts, who tumultuously demanded justice of the members as they were passing, and put into their hands a printed letter to a member of parliament, in which "the unreasonableness and partiality of binding down the redeemables are fully demonstrated," and a written paper, containing these words; "pray do justice to the annuitants who lent their money on parliamentary security." The justices of peace for the city of Westminster, and the constables, were instantly sent for, and the house proceeded to business. Tumults in opposition to it:

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

neſs. Sir John Ward preſented the petition of the proprietors of the redeemable funds, praying to be heard by themſelves or counſel againſt the bill. The petition being ordered to lie on the table, the bill was read a ſecond time, and ordered to be committed. Sir John Ward then ſpoke in favour of the petition, and was ſeconded by Sir Gilbert Heathcote. Walpole obſerved, that he could not ſee how the petitioners could be relieved; that the reſolutions on which the bill was founded had been approved by the king and council, and been agreed to by a great majority of the houſe; he therefore moved for the previous queſtion, and adjourning the debate. Brodrick warmly oppoſed the original motion, and was ſtrenuouſly ſeconded by Sandys; but the queſtion for adjourning was carried by a majority of 78 to 29.

Allayed.

Meanwhile the tumult continuing, the juſtices of peace were commanded by the ſpeaker to diſperſe the rioters, which they effected not without ſome difficulty, and after reading the riot act, many of them exclaiming as they retired, "You firſt pick our pockets, and then ſend us to gaol for complaining." On the following day, the bill was laid before the committee, and, after ſome warm debates, in regard to the price at which the holders of the ſaid ſubſcriptions ſhould take South Sea ſtock, and the repeal of a clauſe for compelling the bankers to reſtore the whole money they had borrowed, which Walpole ſucceſsfully oppoſed, was carried in the affirmative, and ordered to be

Bill paſſes.

engroſſed. On the 7th, it was read the third time,

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time, passed, and sent to the lords, and on the 10th received the royal assent *. Chapter 21. 1721.

This bill for the restoration of public credit, arranged the affairs of the South Sea company in such a manner, that five millions of the seven, which the directors had agreed to pay the public, were remitted. The incumbrances were partly discharged from the confiscation of the forfeited estates; the credit of their bonds maintained, £. 33. 6s. 8d. per cent. were divided among the proprietors; the company was soon in a situation to fulfil its engagements with the public, and two millions were reserved towards the liquidation of the national debt. But the proprietors made such loud and repeated complaints on the hardship of depriving them of these two millions, that the parliament afterwards remitted that sum, which made an addition of £. 6. 5s. per cent.

The spirit by which Walpole was directed, and the principles by which he acted, during the whole progress of this delicate business, are laid down in the speech from the throne, on the prorogation of parliament, which he drew up.

"The common calamity, occasioned by the wicked execution of the South Sea scheme, was become so very great before your meeting, that the providing proper remedies for it was very difficult; but it is a great comfort to me to observe, that public credit now begins to recover; which gives me the greatest hopes that it will be entirely re- King's speech on the prorogation.

* Journals.—Political State for July and August.

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ſtored, when all the proviſions you have made for that end, ſhall be duly put in execution. I have great compaſſion for the ſufferings of the innocent, and a juſt indignation againſt the guilty; and have readily given my aſſent to ſuch bills as you have preſented to me, for puniſhing the authors of our late misfortunes, and for obtaining the reſtitution and ſatisfaction due to thoſe who have been injured by them, in ſuch a manner as you judged proper. I was at the ſame time willing and deſirous, by my free and general pardon, to *give eaſe and quiet to the reſt of my ſubjects, many of whom may, in ſuch a general infatuation, have been unwarily drawn in to tranſgreſs the laws**."

Advantages derived from the South Sea ſcheme.

Thus at length, by the ability, addreſs, and perſeverance of Walpole, the fatal project of the South Sea was converted into a national benefit; the diſtreſſes are forgotten, and the advantages remain. Although by the remiſſion of the ſeven millions, the public did not enjoy all the benefits which had been ſanguinely expected, yet much greater advantage was derived than is uſually ſuppoſed. £.632,698 of long and ſhort annuities were converted into redeemable ſtock, which at this time bears an intereſt of only 3 per cent. and the intereſt on the company's capital was reduced at Midſummer 1727 to 4 per cent. By this the public gained annually £.339,631, which, calculated at 25 years purchaſe, was worth above 8 millions†. This reduction was alſo productive of great uſe and na-

* Journals.

† Sinclair on the Revenue, Part 2. p. 106.

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tional advantage; it was a precedent for future arrangements of a similar nature, and in 1724, £.3,775,027 was also reduced to 4 per cent *. Chapter 21. 1721.

In the midst of these distresses, from the decline of public credit, and dearth of money, the enormous profusion of Sunderland's administration, laid Walpole under the necessity of applying to parliament for the discharge of the debts of the civil list, which amounted to no less a sum than £.550,000. To propose the laying on of new burdens on the people for the discharge of these arrears, in this moment of general calamity, would have been exceemely unpopular, and perhaps not practicable. Walpole, therefore, hit upon an expedient which effectually succeeded, without imposing an additional tax on the public at large. It was to make the civil list discharge its own arrears, by deducting six pence in the pound on all payments from the crown, towards raising a fund for liquidating the interest of the sum required. The proposal being, on the 12th of July, laid before a committee of the whole house, Pulteney, who though not in opposition yet began to be dissatisfied with the administration, moved for a deduction of one shilling in the pound, adding, that if this deduction were too much for the present occasion, it might be applied to the discharge of the civil list debts. This motion was carried by 153 voices against 63 †. On the 14th, this resolution being submitted to the house, was opposed with Payment of the civil list debt.

* Sinclair, p. 106.

† Political State for July 1721.

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greater effect by the friends of adminiſtration, and negatived by a majority of 132 againſt 83*. The original propoſition was then moved, and paſſed without a diviſion, "That his majeſty ſhould be enabled to raiſe any ſum not exceeding £.500,000, to diſcharge the arrears and debts due and owing upon the civil liſt to his ſervants and others, by ſettling a yearly fund for payment of annuities, after the rate of five pounds per cent. per annum, out of the civil liſt revenues, until the ſame ſhall be redeemed by the crown; and that his majeſty, his heirs and ſucceſſors, be enabled to make good, for the uſes of the civil government, all ſuch money as from time to time ſhall have been paid thereupon, by cauſing a deduction, not exceeding ſix pence in the pound, to be made out of ſalaries, wages, penſions, or other payments from the crown†." Thus Walpole arranged this delicate buſineſs, which he was often heard to ſay ‡ gave him much embarraſſment, and on the ſucceſsful iſſue of which he prided himſelf as much as on any other financial operation which he effected during the courſe of his adminiſtration.

The whole conduct of Walpole in the South Sea buſineſs, was ſanctioned by both houſes of parliament, and approved by the nation in general. No invective was thrown out againſt him, even by party, except that he had employed the power of government and his own influence in *ſcreening* Sunderland;

* Chandler.

† Journals.—Political State.—Chandler.

‡ From Lord Orford.

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derland; and that he had endeavoured to prevent the juſtice of the nation from overwhelming the projectors of the fatal South Sea ſcheme. For this cauſe, he was invidiouſly reviled in the periodical writings and pamphlets of the times, and Saint John Brodrick, in a letter to the lord chancellor Middleton, laments that the interpoſition of Walpole, whom he ſtigmatiſes by the name of the *Screen*, ſaved the directors from confiſcation and hanging. But at the diſtance of fourteen years, the oppoſition accuſed him of having fraudulently propoſed the bank contract, and of deluding the unhappy ſufferers with falſe hopes of relief. It was aſſerted that he took a ſcandalous advantage of the general calamity, and made the misfortunes of his country the means of enriching himſelf; that he had concerted the project ſeveral months before with the bank, and that in order to engage the governors conſent, he gave them private aſſurances of being releaſed from their engagement, if it ſhould prove unfavourable. Chapter 21. 1721.

This attack on the character of Walpole was managed, in the Craftſman, and other antiminiſterial writings*, with all the art and ſtrength which could be ſupplied by the ſophiſtry of Bolingbroke, and the wit of Pulteney. The charge was alſo rendered more plauſible by the concurrence of Aiſlabie, who, in conjunction with ſecretary Craggs, had been conſidered as the principal manager of the buſineſs on the ſide of government, and was

* Caſe of the Sinking Fund, Craftſman for 1735.

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preſent at the meeting in which the contract was ſigned. This heinous charge was anſwered by the miniſter himſelf, and by the writers * in his intereſt. Without entering into a tedious inquiry on this ſubject, or attempting to juſtify the conduct of Walpole in every particular, I ſhall obſerve, that on a candid review of the whole controverſy, it appears that an accuſation urged *for the firſt time* fourteen years after the fact, when it was impoſſible for him to recollect all the circumſtances, and to juſtify every part of the tranſaction, was malicious in itſelf, and undeſerving of credit. It may be alſo remarked, that the aſſertions of Aiſlabie, cannot be admitted as fair evidence in his own cauſe; and that he falſely arraigned the miniſter, may be implied from a private letter † written in 1722, in which he frankly confeſſed his own folly and weakneſs in promoting the South Sea ſcheme, and expreſſed, in the ſtrongeſt terms, his gratitude for the kindneſs and lenity ſhewn to him by government, which he ſolely imputes to the interference of Walpole.

In regard to the moſt heinous part of the charge, that he had firſt induced the bank to accede to the agreement, and "afterwards releaſed them from the obligation, when his own private purpoſes were ſerved;" the bank contract, it was anſwered, being precipitately drawn up in the midſt of general alarm and deſpondency, and at the earneſt impor-

* Some Conſiderations on the Public Funds, Gazetteer for 1735, paſſim.

† Correſpondence, Period III.

tunity

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tunity of the miniſtry and South Sea directors, there could be no colluſion betwixt him and the bank; and no blame could attach to him, becauſe the governors refuſed to fulfil the terms of an agreement they had reluctantly acceded to, which if they had fulfilled, would have involved the bank and South Sea company in equal ruin. Chapter 21. 1721.

It muſt not be omitted, that ſoon after the bank contract was drawn up, and the ingraftment ſcheme had paſſed, he was accuſed *of favouring the bank, in preference to the South Sea company*, that he might ſell out the money he had in the bank at an advanced price. But as in reply to this attack, he had publicly declared in the houſe of commons that he had not one penny in the bank at that juncture, but poſſeſſed a large ſtock in the South Sea company, his opponents afterwards, in 1735, reverſed the accuſation and declared that he had adopted thoſe meaſures to *favour the South Sea in preference to the bank*, that he might ſell out the money he had in that ſtock at an advanced price. Theſe two contradictory aſſertions deſtroy each other, and prove the weakneſs of both.

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CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND:

1721—1722.

Townshend appointed Secretary of State on the Death of Earl Stanhope, and Walpole First Lord of the Treasury on the Resignation of Sunderland.—Supports the Swedish Subsidy.—Affairs of Sweden to the Peace of Nystadt.—Domestic Transactions.—Commercial Regulations.—Abolition of various Duties.—Importation of Naval Stores encouraged.—Advancement of national Industry.—Dean Tucker's Eulogium of Walpole.

February 4. Townshend secretary of state.

Walpole first lord of the treasury.

THE death of earl Stanhope, and the accusation of Sunderland, opened the way to the re-establishment of Townshend and Walpole in their former places: for although Sunderland had been acquitted by a considerable majority, yet the public opinion was too unfavourable for him to be continued in the office of first lord of the treasury. The negotiation for settling the new administration had been entrusted, by Devonshire and Townshend, to the management of Walpole; and it was not without great difficulty that Sunderland, who maintained the most unbounded influence over the sovereign, had been induced, or rather compelled, to consent to the proposed arrangement, and particularly to relinquish the disposal of the secret service money*; but he at length acceded. Townshend had been previously appointed secretary of state on the death of Stanhope. Methuen was made comptroller of the household, Walpole first

April 2. 1721.

* Pulteney's Answer to one Part of a late infamous Libel, p. 55.

lord

lord of the treaſury and chancellor of the exche- Chapter 22.
quer, and a new board, conſiſting of his confiden- 1721 to 1722.
tial friends *, was nominated at his diſcretion.

Almoſt the firſt meaſure of government which Walpole ſupported in the houſe of commons after his elevation, ſeemed to belie his conduct while in oppoſition, for which he has been bitterly reproached by thoſe writers who perceive no difference between oppoſing a treaty before it is concluded, and ſupporting the national honour by adhering to it when ratified. Supports the Swediſh ſubſidy.

The death of Charles the Twelfth was the prelude to the pacification of the north; and changed the ſituation of Sweden, and the ſyſtem of Engliſh politics in that quarter. On that event, Charles Frederic duke of Holſtein Gottorp, the ſon of Hedwige, eldeſt ſiſter of Charles, was the next heir; and if hereditary right had prevailed, would have ſucceeded to the throne. But the preponderating party in Sweden, eſpouſed the pretenſions of Ulrica Eleonora, youngeſt ſiſter of the deceaſed monarch, who was married to Frederic prince of Heſſe Caſſel. Affairs of Sweden.

The news of the king's death no ſooner reached Stockholm, than the ſenate repaired to the apartment of Ulrica, and congratulated her on her acceſſion to the throne †; at the ſame time the new queen declared her conſent to renounce that abſolute power which Charles the Eleventh had veſted

* George Baley, Sir Charles Turner, Henry Pelham, Richard Edgecumbe.

† Lagerbring Hiſt. de Suede.

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in the crown, and which had proved the ſource of many calamities to Sweden. Her title was ſoon afterwards acknowledged by the army, in oppoſition to the remonſtrances of the duke of Holſtein, who laid claim to the throne as his right by hereditary deſcent; and the pretenſions of his rival were confirmed by the ſtates, which aſſembled at Stockholm on the 20th of January 1719. In that aſſembly, count Horn, a nobleman of great diſtinction and capacity, obſerved in full ſenate, and in the preſence of the queen, with whom he had concerted the declaration, that both Ulrica and her ſiſter Hedwige had forfeited their title to the crown, becauſe their marriages had not been confirmed by the ſtates. On the meeting of the ſtates, Ulrica delivered a memorial, in which ſhe diſclaimed all pretenſions, and that the throne being vacant, they might proceed to an election. On this formal renunciation, Ulrica Eleonora was elected by the ſtates, and gave her conſent to the new form of government, which rendered the ſovereign of Sweden, from the moſt abſolute, the moſt limited monarch in Europe. The new queen, or rather the ſenate, who poſſeſſed the whole power of government, had ſufficient occupation to deliver the country from the dreadful ſituation to which it had been reduced by a war of twenty years, and to conclude terms of pacification with Hanover, Pruſſia, Denmark, Poland, and Ruſſia.

Before the death of Charles the Twelfth, a congreſs had been held in the Iſle of Aland, between the Swediſh and Pruſſian plenipotentiaries; had

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the Swediſh monarch lived, Baron Gortz could have reconciled Peter and Charles, both equally incenſed againſt George the Firſt; and a combined army of Swedes and Ruſſians, after conquering Norway, would have landed in Scotland for the purpoſe of placing the Pretender on the throne of Great Britain. Chapter 22. 1721 to 1722.

On the death of Charles, George, though involved in diſputes with Spain, yet ſecure of the co-operation of France, diſpatched Carteret and Baſſewitz to break up the congreſs of Aland, and to prevent the pacification between Ruſſia and Sweden, from a dread, leſt their union ſhould render his mediation unneceſſary, and induce Sweden to decline confirming the ceſſion of Bremen and Verden. Carteret ſucceeded in his negotiation, and is applauded, though not without regret, by the Swediſh hiſtorians*, for the conſummate addreſs with which he prevailed on Sweden to conclude a ſeparate peace with Hanover, which was followed by a ſubſidiary alliance with England, under the mediation and guarantee of France.

Before the pacification was finally concluded, Sweden ſuffered ſeverely for breaking off the congreſs of Aland. The Danes took Marſtrand, the Gibraltar of the north, and threatened Gotheborg. Forty thouſand Ruſſians landed in different parts of Sweden, and carried havock and deſtruction into the kingdom, reduced eight towns, and above 1,300 villages to aſhes†. The arrival of the Eng-

* Lagerbring, Hiſt. de Suède.

† Schmidt Ruſſ. Geſch. vol. 2. p. 308.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

liſh fleet put a temporary ſtop to this invaſion, and haſtened the peace of Sweden with Hanover, Pruſſia, and Denmark. Carteret, ſupported by the preſence of an Engliſh fleet in the Baltic, deluded Sweden * with promiſes to aſſiſt in wreſting from Ruſſia the conquered provinces, and prevailed on her to confirm the ceſſion of Bremen and Verden to Hanover; Stetin and the diſtrict between the Oder and Plene, to Pruſſia; to renounce the claims of exemption from the Sound duties, and to engage not to aſſiſt the duke of Holſtein, ſhould he attempt the recovery of Sleſwic. Denmark gave back to Sweden Marſtrand, Stralſund, and the Iſle of Wiſmar for 600,000 rixdollars, relinquiſhed her alliance with Ruſſia; and, as an indemnification for the conqueſts reſtored, England and France gratified Denmark by guarantying Sleſwic †.

Peter, incenſed at theſe treaties, which expoſed him ſingly to the united forces of Sweden and England, did not loſe courage, but continued his invaſion of Sweden, which the Engliſh fleet could not prevent; arreſted the Engliſh merchants who were ſettled in his dominions, and his reſident in London delivered a ſtrong memorial againſt the inſolent interpoſition of Great Britain.

Proceedings in parliament.

In conſequence of the Ruſſian invaſion, Sweden had recourſe to England for aſſiſtance. The king ſent a fleet into the Baltic, and applied to parliament for a ſubſidy of £.72,000, according to the terms ſtipulated by the treaty of alliance. The

June 19.

* Lagerbring.

† Mallet, Hiſt. de Danemarc.

motion

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motion to make good these engagements was violently opposed in the house of commons by Sir William Wyndham, Shippen, and lord Molesworth, who had long resided in Denmark, and who published an excellent account of that kingdom. He ably contended, that the alliance was contrary to former treaties with Denmark and Russia; that it was unjust to insist that Peter should restore his conquests, while other princes retained the spoils of Sweden; and that the only equitable mode of proceeding, was for Prussia to restore Stetin, and the elector of Hanover, Bremen and Verden; he artfully insinuated that the claim to Mecklenburgh was one of the causes which occasioned the rupture with Russia; urged that England ought not to intermeddle with the affairs of the empire; and that the procuring of naval stores was the principal advantage of our trade to the Baltic. To these strong arguments Walpole could only reply, that the subsidy allowed to Sweden and the mission of the squadron to the Baltic had been stipulated by former engagements, which, if not complied with, would affect the national honour. But the chief motive which induced the parliament to grant this subsidy, was the declaration that another would not be demanded, as the preliminaries between Russia and Sweden were wholly settled; yet so strong were the objections to the hostilities against Russia, that the motion for the subsidy was only carried by a majority of 59 *.

Chapter 22. 1721 to 1722.

Sweden deriving no effectual assistance from

* Journals.—Chandler.

England

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

England, was compelled to receive the terms of peace dictated by Ruſſia; and Peter, refuſing to accept the mediation of a power which had offended him, granted, under the guarantee of France, the peace of Nyſtadt. Sweden ceded to Ruſſia Livonia, Eſthonia, Ingria, part of Carelia, and the diſtrict of Viborg in Finland. In return, Peter reſtored the remaining part of Finland, paid 2,000,000 rixdollars (£. 500,000) as an indemnification for Livonia, and promiſed not to interfere in the domeſtic concerns of Sweden.

Peace of Nyſtadt.

September.

During theſe tranſactions, Ulrica Eleonora had reſigned the crown in favour of her huſband Frederic the Firſt, who purchaſed his election by confirming all limitations of prerogative to which the queen had conſented. This transfer of the crown occaſioned many diſcontents, increaſed the Holſtein faction, gave to Peter the Great the means of gaining a ſtrong party in the ſenate, and enabled him to foment the internal diſcontents natural to a popular government; it expoſed the country to future conflicts in the north, and entailed on the Britiſh adminiſtration, a ſeries of complicated and difficult negotiations.

Commercial Regulations.

Walpole had ſcarcely ſettled the buſineſs of the South Sea, and reſtored public credit, when he turned his attention to trade and manufactures, and gave a convincing proof of his liberal and extenſive views. On being again placed at the head of the treaſury, he found the foreign trade ſhackled with numerous petty duties and impoveriſhing taxes, which obſtructed the exportation of our manufactures;

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manufactures, and leſſened the importation of the moſt neceſſary commodities. Walpole framed the noble plan of aboliſhing at once all theſe reſtrictions, and giving freedom to the moſt valuable branches of our external and internal commerce. Chapter 22. 1721 to 1722.

The ſpeech delivered from the throne at the opening of the ſeventh and laſt ſeſſion of this ever memorable parliament, in conformity to this plan, is juſtly praiſed by Uztariz *, an eminent Spaniſh writer, as a model of good ſenſe and liberality of ſpirit. It was drawn up by Walpole, and contains the great outlines of the ſalutary plan which he had formed for the extenſion of trade. October 19, 1721.

"In this ſituation of affairs, we ſhould be extremely wanting to ourſelves, if we neglected to improve the favourable opportunity which this general tranquillity gives us, of extending our commerce, upon which the riches and grandeur of this nation chiefly depend. It is very obvious, that nothing would more conduce to the obtaining ſo public a good, than to make the exportation of our own manufactures, and the importation of the commodities uſed in the manufacturing of them, as practicable and as eaſy as may be; by this means, the balance of trade may be preſerved in our favour, our navigation increaſed, and greater numbers of our poor employed. I muſt therefore recommend it to you, gentlemen of the houſe of commons, to conſider how far the duties King's ſpeech.

* Uztariz, Theory and Practice of Commerce, ch. 28. vol. 1. p. 131.

upon

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upon these branches may be taken off, and replaced without any violation of public faith, or laying any new burthen upon my people. And I promise myself, that by a due consideration of this matter, the produce of those duties, compared with the infinite advantages that will accrue to the kingdom by their being taken off, will be found so inconsiderable, as to leave little room for any difficulties or objections.

"The supplying ourselves with naval stores upon terms the most easy and least precarious, seems highly to deserve the care and attention of parliament. Our plantations in America naturally abound with most of the proper materials for this necessary and essential part of our trade and maritime strength; and if by due encouragement, we could be furnished from thence with those naval stores, which we are now obliged to purchase, and bring from foreign countries, it would not only greatly contribute to the riches, influence, and power of this nation, but, by employing our own colonies in this useful and advantageous service, divert them from setting up, and carrying on manufactures which directly interfere with those of Great Britain *."

Abolition of various duties.

In consequence of this recommendation, one hundred and six articles of British manufacture were allowed to be exported, and thirty-eight articles of raw materials to be imported duty free.

Importation of naval stores encouraged.

The other great object recommended in the speech, which regarded the importation of naval

* Chandler, vol. 6. p. 263.

stores

ſtores from the American colonies, was effected in the ſame ſeſſions. It had long been a matter of complaint, that the importation of naval ſtores, which were principally drawn from the Baltic, was clogged with numerous duties, and raiſed to an enormous price. It was found, on inquiry into the commerce with Ruſſia, Sweden, Denmark, and the Hanſeatic towns, that the imports exceeded the exports to the amount of more than £. 200,000; it was proved that ſince the Ruſſia company had engroſſed the trade to that country, the price of tar had been doubled, and it was likewiſe notorious, that the ſupplies of naval ſtores might be prohibited, ſhould England be at war with Ruſſia, and the Czar, with a view to increaſe his own navy, inſiſt that naval ſtores ſhould only be exported in Ruſſian veſſels. It was an obvious remark, that ſince theſe commodities were neceſſary for the navy, it was impolitic to be at the mercy of a foreign prince, eſpecially as we might be ſupplied from our own plantations on eaſier terms, and in exchange for our own manufactures. Such were the motives which induced Walpole to countenance a bill for encouraging the introduction of naval ſtores, and granting bounties and premiums to the importers of them from our colonies in North America. Chapter 22. 1721 to 1722.

It is the obſervation of a judicious writer *, that the advancements which have been made in ſhipping, commerce, manufactures, and in all kinds Tucker's eulogium of Walpole.

* Tucker's Theory of Commerce, p. 149. printed, but never publiſhed.—Anderſon on Commerce.—Chalmers's Eſtimate, p. 96.

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of induſtry, ſince the paſſing of this law, have been prodigious; and it cannot be denied, even by the bittereſt enemies of the miniſter, that this national improvement was principally due to his liberal and enlarged ſpirit. He adds, "I am perſuaded, that impartial poſterity will acknowledge, that if ever a ſtateſman deſerved well of the public, Sir Robert Walpole was that man." And yet none of the Engliſh hiſtorians have paid a due tribute of applauſe to theſe beneficial exertions of miniſterial capacity: while ſome of them enter, with a tedious minuteneſs, into a detail of foreign tranſactions, and echo from one to the other the never-failing topic of Hanoverian influence; while they dwell with malignant pleaſure on thoſe parts of his conduct, which in their opinion, prove the aſcendancy of influence and corruption; while they repeat the ſpeeches and reproaches of oppoſition, they ſuffer theſe ſalutary regulations, which ought to render the name of Walpole dear to every Engliſhman, to be principally confined to books of rates and taxes, and only to be mentioned by commercial writers.

Influence of Sunderland not diminiſhed.

Although Sunderland had reſigned all his official employments, yet he ſtill retained his influence at court, and never heartily coaleſced with the new miniſters. He had obtained the appointment of lord Carteret to be ſecretary of ſtate in the place of Craggs, who died on the 16th of February, and the preſidentſhip of the counceil for lord Carleton, in preference to the duke of Devonſhire, who was ſupported by all the influence of

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of Townſhend and Walpole. He fomented a diviſion in the cabinet, and carried ſeveral points in oppoſition to the other members. Chapter 22. 1721 to 1722.

The conduct of Sunderland at this period, is involved in ſo much myſtery, as to leave his character open to every ſuſpicion. It is impoſſible to aſcertain to what fatal purpoſe he meant to employ his aſcendancy over his ſovereign, or to what extremes he might have been driven by his diſguſt againſt the prince of Wales; he intrigued with the Tories, and * made overtures to biſhop Atterbury. He propoſed, at a time when the ferment occaſioned by the South Sea ſcheme was at its extreme height, to diſſolve the parliament, and induced the king to ſanction his views, by perſuading him that there was not money enough in the treaſury to ſecure the return of a Whig majority, and that the Tories, under his influence, would ſcreen the projectors of the South Sea, and ſuppreſs all inquiry on the ſubject. But this dangerous and inſidious propoſal was over-ruled by the ſagacity and intrepidity of Walpole, who repreſented the extreme danger and impolicy of the meaſure, and took on himſelf the charge of finding the ſums neceſſary to ſupport the Whig majority †. Sunderland did not dare to avow any intimate connection with, or preference of the Tories, and was obliged to yield to theſe arguments and aſſurances; but the Pretender and the Jacobites certainly, at this time, entertained the moſt ſanguine hopes. Sunderland became a great fa- Myſtery of his conduct.

* Walpole Papers. † Etough.

vourite

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vourite with them and the Tories, his health was conſtantly drank * by them, and they affected to be ſecure of attaining, by his means, the accompliſhment of their wiſhes.

Not all the ſervices which Walpole had performed to his king, to his country, not even his merit in ſcreening Sunderland from the rage of the houſe of commons, could expiate the crime of having ſuperſeded that ambitious and domineering miniſter at the head of the treaſury, who dreaded his abilities and popularity, and who ſaw in him a rival not unlikely to ſupplant him in the confidence and favour of the ſovereign. Sunderland, jealous of his growing power, determined either to remove him from his ſituation in the houſe of commons, or again to obtain his diſmiſſion. Under the ſemblance of favour, he requeſted the king to create him poſtmaſter general for life; a lucrative office, which if he accepted would incapacitate him from a ſeat in parliament, and if he refuſed, would ſubject him to the reſentment of his ſovereign. Contrary, however, to his expectations, George inquired if Walpole had deſired it, or was acquainted with it: Sunderland replied in the negative: "then" returned the king, "do not make him the offer, I parted with him once againſt my inclination, and I will never part with him again as long as he is willing to ſerve me †." This unexpected demur ſuſpended the deſigns of Sunderland; and his death, which happened

His attempt to remove Walpole defeated.

Death of Sunderland.

* Secret Intelligence.—Townſhend Papers.

† Horace Walpole to Etough, July 31, 1731.

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pened on the 19th of April 1722, prevented his attempts to remove Walpole, which, considering his influence and ascendancy, might have been finally successful. Chapter 23. 1721 to 1722.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-THIRD.

1722—1723.

Meeting of the new Parliament.—Atterbury's Plot.—Memoirs.—Bill of Pains and Penalties.—Conduct in Exile.—Death.—Tax on the Estates of Roman Catholics, and Non-jurors.

THE parliament, in pursuance of the opinion of Walpole, was not dissolved until the 10th of March, a few days before it would have died a natural death. The new parliament assembled on the 19th of October; and it soon appeared, that the promise of Walpole to obtain a majority of Whigs was fulfilled. Meeting of the new parliament.

During the ferment of the general election, the plot of which bishop Atterbury was the head, was detected, and from the mention of it in the king's speech, it became the first object which engaged the attention of the legislature. As Walpole, from his situation and intelligence, procured the earliest information of this conspiracy, and took an active share in the prosecution, I shall throw together a few anecdotes of bishop Atterbury, and add such new information as can be derived from the Orford and Walpole Papers. Atterbury's plot.

Francis Atterbury was born at Middleton, near Newport Pagnel, in Buckinghamshire, in 1662. Account of Atterbury.

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He received his education at Weſtminſter ſchool, and was from thence elected a ſtudent of Chriſt-Church College Oxford. At both places he took indefatigable pains in improving himſelf, and at a very early period, was diſtinguiſhed for elegance of taſte, and knowledge of claſſical literature, which he diſplayed in a Latin verſion of Dryden's Abſalom and Achitophel, and a tranſlation of ſome odes of Horace. In the 24th year of his age he proved his talents in controverſial writing, by vindicating Martin Luther, in a publication, which induced Burnet to rank him among thoſe eminent divines who had ſignaliſed themſelves by their admirable defences of the Proteſtant religion. On taking orders, he acquired a high reputation by his talent in preaching, and by ſupporting, againſt Hoadly and Wake, the doctrines of the high church. Bred up in Tory principles, he wrote in favour of paſſive obedience, and diſplayed ſo much learning and ingenuity, that he was choſen prolocutor of the lower houſe of convocation, and chiefly managed the affairs in that aſſemby. A ſimilarity of opinion induced him warmly to eſpouſe the cauſe of his friend Sacheverel, and he is ſuppoſed to have had the principal ſhare in drawing up the maſterly defence which the doctor delivered at his trial. He was firſt patroniſed by Sir Jonathan Trelawney, biſhop of Exeter; appointed by the Tory adminiſtration of queen Anne, dean of Chriſt church, and, in 1713, advanced, at the recommendation of the earl of Oxford, to the biſhopric of Rocheſter and deanery of Weſtminſter. At that period he

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was in such high estimation with the queen and ministry, that he was not unfrequently consulted in points of the utmost importance. He was always inimical to the succession of the Hanover line, and on the death of queen Anne, was accused, by Harcourt, of having offered to assist at the proclamation of the Pretender, in his lawn sleeves; and when Ormond and Bolingbroke declined taking any vigorous step, is reported to have exclaimed, "Never was a better cause lost for want of spirit!" It is certain that he was involved in the schemes of Bolingbroke, and a letter from that minister * soon after the queen's death, proves the extreme confidence reposed in him. Chapter 23. 1722 to 1723.

On the accession of George the First, he received evident marks of coldness from the new sovereign; and on the breaking out of the rebellion, gave an instance of his disaffection, by refusing to sign the declaration of the bishops, in favour of the crown. He uniformly employed his great eloquence in the house of lords, in opposing the measures of government, and in drawing up the most violent protests. Atterbury was of a restless aspiring temper, and eager to obtain the highest honours of the church, which he would certainly have acquired, had not queen Anne died. The active part which he had taken during her reign, against the succession of the house of Brunswick, and his uniform opposition to the government of the new sovereign, precluded him from all expectations of

* Macpherson's Papers, vol. 2. p. 651.

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promotion. But when Sunderland courted the Tories, and made overtures to him as to the leader of the disaffected party, his conduct was so equivocal, that his friends * reproached him with having deserted his principles; and his enemies did not hesitate asserting that he had engaged in a conspiracy against the government, because his demand of the bishoprick of Winchester was rejected. There seems, however, to be no foundation for these reflections; it is probable, that in listening to the overtures of Sunderland, he conceived hopes, that the minister was inclined to promote the cause of the Pretender, and that Sunderland was duped by him, rather than that he was duped by Sunderland. And if we may judge from the inflexibility of his character, there is reason to believe that he rejected all offers of promotion, and was never inclined to desert his party †.

Conspiracy discovered by the regent.

It appears from Sir Luke Schaub's correspondence from Paris ‡, that the first intimation of the conspiracy in which he was engaged, came from the regent duke of Orleans, to whom the agents of the Pretender communicated the plot, in hopes of receiving assistance from him, and that he betrayed them to the king of England.

Habeas corpus suspended.

In consequence of his full conviction of the truth and danger of the conspiracy, Walpole took an active share in conducting the prosecution: He first mentioned it to the house, when the bill for

* Prior to Swift, April 25, 1721.—Swift's Letters, vol. 2.

† Biographia Britannica.—Article Atterbury.—Memoirs of his Life prefixed to his Miscellaneous Works by Nicholls.

‡ Hardwicke Papers.

suspending

ſuſpending the habeas corpus act was oppoſed, and a motion made to limit its duration to ſix months. This motion being ſtrongly and ably ſeconded, ſeemed on the point of being carried, when Walpole laid before the houſe ſome particulars of the conſpiracy; he ſaid, "That this wicked deſign was formed about Chriſtmas laſt; that the conſpirators had at firſt made application to ſome potentates abroad, for an aſſiſtance of 5,000 men: that being denied, they afterwards, about the month of April, made farther application, and earneſt inſtances for 3,000; that being again diſappointed in their expectations from foreign aſſiſtance, they reſolved deſperately to go on, confiding in their own ſtrength, and fondly depending on the diſaffection of England; and that their firſt attempt was to have been the ſeizing of the bank, the exchequer, and other places where the public money was lodged: that although government had undoubted informations of this plot ever ſince May laſt; no perſons had been apprehended, becauſe there being then two terms coming on together, they would have had the benefit of the *habeas corpus* act, and their arreſt was deferred till the long vacation." He added, "That the traiterous deſigns againſt his majeſty's perſon and government had been projecting ever ſince the death of the late queen; and evident proofs would appear that there had been a meeting of ſome conſiderable perſons, one of whom was not far off, wherein it had been propoſed to proclaim the Pretender at the Royal Exchange; that an exact account of

Chapter 23. 1722 to 1723.

1722.

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this deteſtable conſpiracy would, in due time, be laid before parliament." He concluded, by obſerving, "that although it was true, that the *habeas corpus* act had never before been ſuſpended for above ſix months; yet, as the lords had made this ſuſpenſion for a whole year, if the commons ſhould propoſe any alteration, it might occaſion a difference between the two houſes, which, at this time of jealouſy and danger, might be attended with bad effects in foreign courts*." Accordingly the bill was carried by a majority of 246 againſt 193.

Bills of pains and penalties againſt Atterbury.

Bills of pains and penalties paſſed againſt the inferior agents, Plunket and Kelly, Layer having been tried and condemned, the biſhop became the object of general attention. In conſequence of the report of the committee, a bill was brought into the houſe of commons, for ſubjecting him to baniſhment and deprivation. On receiving a copy of the bill, he wrote a letter to the ſpeaker, requiring to have the aſſiſtance of counſel and ſolicitors in making his defence, which was granted. Having obtained this indulgence, he laid before the houſe of lords, a petition, ſtating that, by an order of their houſe, no lord might appear by counſel before the houſe of commons, that he was under great difficulties how to act, and requeſting their directions. It was accordingly moved, "That the biſhop being a lord of parliament, ought not to anſwer, or make his defence by counſel, or otherwiſe, in the houſe of commons, to a bill there de-

March 22d.

25th.

29th.

* Chandler.

pending."

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pending." This motion produced an argument of Chapter 23.
ſome length, which was terminated by the obſer- 1722 to 1723.
vation of the duke of Wharton, "That the biſhop having already applied to the houſe of commons, in a letter to their ſpeaker, for counſel, it was prepoſterous now for him to pray the lords not to give him leave to be heard before the commons, which was the drift of his petition." And upon a ſecond queſtion, leave was given for him to be heard by his counſel, or otherwiſe, as he might think proper. Left thus to his own diſcretion, on the 4th April.
day he was expected to have made his defence, he ſent a letter to the ſpeaker, ſtating, "That he ſhould decline giving that houſe any trouble, contenting himſelf with the opportunity, if the bill went on, of making his defence before another, of which he had the honour to be a member." The bill having paſſed the commons, was 9th.
ſent up to the lords, and on the 6th of May, he was brought to the bar to make his defence; he made a long and artful ſpeech himſelf, and his counſel, Sir Conſtantine Phipps and Mr. Wynne, diſplayed great zeal and ability; but the bill finally 27th May.
paſſed the lords, and received the royal aſſent*.

The conſpiracy in which Atterbury was concerned, and for which he was exiled, has ſhared the fate of many other plots which have not been carried into execution. It was at the time credited by one party, and diſbelieved by the other; and even ſubſequent writers have, according to their

* Journals.—State Trials.—Chandler.—Lords' Debates.—Tindal.—Speaker Onſlow on Oppoſition, Correſpondence, Period IV.

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principles, considered it as real or pretended. The public opinion of the minister is sufficiently known from the active part which he took in discovering and counteracting the conspiracy, and his private opinion is detailed in a confidential letter which he wrote to his brother Horace, then envoy at the Hague; about three months before Atterbury was arrested *.

It would be needless as well as tedious to canvass the principal arguments for or against bishop Atterbury. It will be sufficient to observe that the proofs of his guilt, though not derived from positive, but from circumstantial and presumptive evidence, were as strong as the nature of the case would admit; considering the early period at which the plot was discovered, and the great art and talents of the culprit, they were such as to stamp on the impartial mind, the most indelible conviction. It was indeed a strong proof of the lenity of government, that a bill of attainder was not brought in against him, and that he was only punished with deprivation and banishment.

His popularity.

The commitment of the bishop of Rochester to the Tower, had occasioned great clamours. Under pretence of his being afflicted with the gout, he was publicly prayed † for in most of the churches of London and Westminster, and a print of him was circulated, in which he was represented looking through the grate of a prison, and holding in his hand a portrait of archbishop Laud, with some

* May 29th, 1722, Correspondence, Period III.

† Political State, vol. 4. p. 21.

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verſes, commiſerating his ſituation, and calling him

- - - - - - - - - - "a ſecond Laud,
"Whoſe chriſtian courage nothing fears but God."

It was alſo apprehended, that his removal on board the ſhip which was to convey him into baniſhment, would have been the ſignal of inſurrection, but no tumults took place. Walpole, in a letter to Townſhend, dated Whitehall, June 20, 1723, thus ſpeaks of his embarkation:

"The late biſhop of Rocheſter went away on Tueſday. The croud that attended him before his embarkation was not more than was expected; but great numbers of boats attended him to the ſhip's ſide. Nothing very extraordinary, but the duke of Wharton's behaviour, who went on board the veſſel with him; and a free converſation betwixt his holineſs and Williamſon*; with menaces of a day of vengeance."

Many reports have been circulated concerning the ſeverity with which Atterbury was treated in the Tower; but upon a candid examination of the facts alledged by the biſhop and his friends, we have no reaſon to imagine that he underwent more rigour than a ſtate priſoner accuſed of a treaſonable conſpiracy uſually meets with. The following inſtance of lenity is not generally known. He was arreſted in Auguſt 1722: The articles of impeachment were brought into the houſe the 23d of March 1723, paſſed the houſe of commons on the 9th of

* Governor of the Tower.

April,

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Period III. 1720 to 1727. April; he spoke in his own defence on the 6th of May, and on the 27th, the king gave his royal assent to the bill of pains and penalties. During the interval between his impeachment and condemnation, several chapters were permitted to be held, under his auspices as dean of Westminster, and the subdean was allowed to act as his proxy. During the month of May, not less than eight chapters were held for signing leases, and on the 31st, it was agreed, "That the lease of the manor of Pensham be *now* sealed and lie in the chapter clerk's hands as an escrole, till the bills he has sent up for the fines are due and paid, this being the last chapter likely to be held till another dean be made, and that the present dean have his proportion of the fine*." This unusual mode of proceeding, by which a very considerable fine was, before payment, reserved for Atterbury, was entirely owing to the connivance, if not to the interference of government, for it is a well known fact, that the bishop of Rochester had offended the chapter by his overbearing behaviour.

Highly esteemed by Pope, &c. Atterbury received the tribute of applause from the first poets of his time: Swift, Pope, and Gay have not omitted to pay high encomiums to his talents and learning. Gay observes, in his Epistle to Pope,

"See Rochester approving nods his head,
"And ranks one modern with the mighty dead."

* I am indebted for the communication of these particulars, taken from the Chapter Books, to a friend who is a prebendary of Westminster.

Pope,

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Pope, in his Epilogue to the Satires, deſcribes his unſhaken firmneſs and reſignation in the hour of proſecution:

"How pleaſing Atterbury's ſofter hour;
"How ſhines his ſoul unconquered in the Tower."

Pope and Swift maintained a conſtant correſpondence with him during his exile, and always expreſſed the higheſt ſentiments of veneration and reſpect for his character. Pope, in particular, almoſt idoliſed his baniſhed friend, and was fully convinced of his honour and integrity, and that he was of a mind too noble to be led by the ſpirit of vengeance to cabal againſt his country.

How ignorant Pope was of his real character, and how much Atterbury belied his admirable portrait of a good and wiſe man in exile *, neither acting from a principle of reſentment, or impelled by revenge, was proved by his ſubſequent conduct. He had no ſooner landed on the Continent, than he threw himſelf into the ſervice of the Pretender and became the principal agent of his affairs, firſt at Bruſſels, and afterwards in France.

The advocates of Atterbury have in vain endeavoured to deny or palliate this fact; and to impreſs a belief that he never attempted to excite a rebellion in England; and that for the purpoſe of avoiding ſolicitations from the Jacobites, he quitted Paris, and went to Montpellier in 1728, where he reſided above two years †: but the contrary is

* Letter from Pope to Atterbury, Pope's Works, vol 5. p. 354.
† Miſcellaneous Works of Biſhop Atterbury, by John Nichols.

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proved from the moſt unqueſtionable evidence, from his private correſpondence with the rebels in Scotland, in 1725, publiſhed by Sir David Dalrymple; from the repeated accounts tranſmitted by Horace Walpole, during his embaſſy at Paris; from the information of ſpies, who diſcovered his cabals, and from the correſpondence between him and his ſon-in-law Mr. Morice, of which extracts are given in the ſecond volume. It appears alſo, from his own account*, that he quitted the management of the Pretender's affairs in 1728, from diſguſt, and not from principle.

Cabal with the Jacobites.

In fact, Atterbury was of too aſpiring a temper to act a ſecondary part: he expected to have been the principal manager of the cabals in France, and to have been employed in carrying on the correſpondence with the diſaffected in England. But on finding that lord Mar and Dillon were more truſted than himſelf, he endeavoured to undermine their influence. With this view he entered into cabals with Murray and Hay, whoſe wife was the Pretender's miſtreſs, and the cauſe that his conſort, the princeſs Maria Clementina, had retired into a convent, and publicly demanded a ſeparation. Although Atterbury was ſcandaliſed at the Pretender's inconſiſtent conduct, and diſguſted with the influence of Hay, yet he meanly condeſcended to join intrigues with him and Murray, juſtified the Pretender, reviled his conſort,

* Letter from Biſhop Atterbury to Mr. Morice, Epiſtolary Correſpondence, vol. 4. p. 161.

and

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and predicted that she would repent of her indiscretion when her husband was restored to the throne of his ancestors, which event his sanguine expectation again led him to consider as not far distant. He had no sooner succeeded in destroying the influence of Mar and Dillon, than he became jealous of Hay and Murray, reviled the Pretender, justified his consort, and retired from Paris, expressing a conviction that the follies and vices of his attainted sovereign excluded all hopes of effectually serving him. During his residence at Montpellier, he affected a love of retirement, and a fondness for the calm pleasures of a country life; but in the midst of these philosophical reveries he did not relinquish his cabals for supplanting Hay and Murray, and after a year's continuance at Montpellier, returned to Paris for the purpose of completing his scheme *. Chapter 23. 1722 to 1723.

At this period his conduct was remarkable for duplicity: for while he seemed absorbed in projects for obtaining the ascendancy in the court of the Pretender, he was looking forwards to England with fond expectations of an act of grace. Soon after his return to Paris, he held frequent conferences in the Bois de Boulogne, with the duchess of Buckingham, natural daughter of James the Second, for the ostensible purpose of giving her advice concerning the education of her son. The real object of these conferences was not discovered until her arrival at Rome, when she prevailed on

* Secret Intelligence from Paris; Orford and Walpole Papers.

her

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her brother to remove Hay and Murray, and invest Atterbury with the principal management of his affairs in France. His sanguine expectations soon led him to anticipate the fall of Sir Robert Walpole, whom he always considered as the greatest support of the reigning family; and whose disgrace, he thought, would be followed by the ascendancy of the Jacobite party in England, and the restoration of the Stuarts *.

His conduct in exile;

Notwithstanding his boasted philosophy, Atterbury passed his time in exile, in a manner which reflects no credit on the firmness of his mind, or the purity of his principles. The restlessness of his temper, his aspiring ambition, his constant cabals, his anxious desire to return, the narrowness of his income, compared with his former opulence, and the continual defection of his partizans in England, preyed upon a mind like his, fed with hopes which were constantly disappointed, and stung with resentment which could not be gratified. His situation was embittered by the ill conduct of his son, and by the death of his beloved daughter Mrs. Morice, who expired in his arms, and of which sad event he has given a pathetic account in a letter to Pope. He died at Paris, on the 15th of February 1731, in the 70th year of his age.

and death.

Steadiness to the Protestant religion.

One fact highly honourable to him, ought not to be omitted; he remained, at all times, true to the Protestant religion, and regular in the perform-

* Secret Intelligence from Paris; Orford and Walpole Papers.

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ance of its duties. He reprobated with warmth, the conduct of the duke of Wharton, lord North and Grey, and others, who had ſacrificed their religion with a view to obtain the Pretender's favour; he even quarrelled with the duke of Berwick, who propoſed giving a Catholic preceptor to the young duke of Buckingham, and uſed his influence over the ducheſs, to place none but Proteſtants about the perſon of her ſon. Chapter 23. 1722 to 1723.

A ſhort time before his death, Atterbury was alarmed, leſt his papers ſhould fall into the hands of government, and that their contents ſhould endanger ſome of his correſpondents. Several of the moſt ſecret he deſtroyed, and with a view to ſecure the remainder, he applied to the Engliſh embaſſador, lord Waldegrave, to affix his ſeal on them, that they might be delivered to his executors *. But lord Waldegrave declined this delicate exertion of his diplomatic privilege, alledging that Atterbury was not intitled to the rights of a Britiſh ſubject. His motives for this refuſal were derived from an unwillingneſs to place himſelf in the embarraſſing ſituation of receiving orders from his own court, to deliver up the confidential depoſit of an exile. Atterbury then applied to the French government, but ſome difficulties ariſing, he withdrew his ſolicitation, and died before he had made an effectual arrangement. On his death, John Sample, a ſpy in the pay of government, who lived in habits of intimacy with the His papers depoſited in the Scots College.

* Correſpondence, Period III. Article Atterbury.

biſhop,

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

biſhop; endeavoured to obtain poſſeſſion of the papers, for the oſtenſible purpoſe of ſending them to the Pretender; but the friends of the deceaſed interpoſed; the papers were ſent to the Scots College, and the ſeal of office affixed. Morice, his ſon-in-law and executor, obtained all thoſe which related to family affairs, and the remainder were left in the college. On his return to England, his papers were ſeized, and Morice was examined before the privy counſel. Several of theſe documents, with the marks of office, are preſerved among the Orford papers; they contain part of the correſpondence between the biſhop and his ſon-in-law, ſeveral miſcellaneous articles in Atterbury's hand-writing, and ſome letters from William Shippen, relating to the character of Hampden, in Clarendon's Hiſtory, which Oldmixon accuſed Atterbury, biſhop Smalridge and Dr. Aldrich, of having interpolated, to which accuſation the biſhop publiſhed a ſatisfactory anſwer *. From theſe papers a ſelection of the moſt curious articles is given in the Correſpondence.

Buried in Weſtminſter Abbey.

The biſhop's body was conveyed to England, for the purpoſe of being interred in Weſtminſter Abbey. On its way the hearſe was ſtopped, and his coffin opened, which occaſioned a great outcry againſt the miniſters, as if their vengeance continued to purſue him even after death; but it ſoon appeared that this indignity proceeded from the cuſtom-houſe officers, who had information that a

* The biſhop's Vindication is printed in Atterbury's Epiſtolary Correſpondence, by Nichols, vol. 3.

conſiderable

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considerable quantity of brocades, and other prohibited goods, was concealed in the coffin. This search being effected, the hearse was suffered to proceed without molestation, and the body, after some difficulty, was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Tax on Roman Catholics. Nov. 23.

Soon after the suspension of the habeas corpus act, Walpole introduced a bill for raising £. 100,000, by laying a tax on the estates of Papists, which was afterwards extended to all Non-jurors. The liberal spirit of the present age, condemns a measure which tended to increase the disaffection of a large body of subjects, and which the arguments advanced by the minister in its favour were calculated only to palliate, but could not justify. For on being urged by several members, and particularly by Onslow, who declared his abhorrence of persecuting any set of men because of their religious opinions, Walpole represented "the great dangers incurred by this nation since the reformation, from the constant endeavours of Papists to subvert our happy constitution and the Protestant religion, by the most cruel, violent, and unjustifiable methods; that he would not take upon him to charge any particular person among them, with being concerned in this horrid conspiracy: That it was notorious that many of them had been engaged in the Preston rebellion, and some were executed for it; and the present plot was contrived at Rome, and countenanced in popish countries; that many of the Papists were not only well-wishers to it, but had contributed large sums for so

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

nefarious a purpoſe, and therefore he thought it but reaſonable they ſhould bear an extraordinary ſhare of the expences to which they had ſubjected the nation *." Whatever opinions may be formed of this meaſure, according to the ſtrict rules of theoretical juſtice, the policy was unqueſtionable. This inſtance of rigour effectually diſcouraged the Papiſts from continuing their attempts againſt the government, and operated as a conſtant check on the turbulent ſpirit of the Non-jurors.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH:

1723—1724.

Walpole's Son made a Peer.—Character, Views, and Intrigues of Carteret.—Struggle in the Cabinet for Pre-eminence.—Conteſt for continuing or removing Sir Luke Schaub.—Miſſion of Horace Walpole to Paris.—Death of the Duke of Orleans.—Succeſsful Efforts of Townſhend and Walpole.—Schaub recalled, Horace Walpole nominated Embaſſador.—Change in the miniſtry; Carteret appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.—Unanimity in Parliament.—Walpole made Knight of the Bath and Garter.

June 10. Walpole declines a peerage.

IN this year the king rewarded the ſervices of Walpole, by creating his ſon a peer. Hitherto it had been cuſtomary for thoſe who were intruſted with the chief direction of affairs, to be placed in the houſe of lords; and the ſame diſtinction had been offered by the king to him; but conſcious that his talents were beſt calculated for the houſe

* Chandler.

of

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of commons, and that his conſequence would ſoon decline if he was called to the upper houſe, he waved the dignity for himſelf, but accepted it for his ſon, who was created baron Walpole, of Walpole, in the county of Norfolk. The patent takes notice of this circumſtance in a manner highly honourable to the miniſter: "Our moſt beloved and moſt faithful counſellor, Robert Walpole, firſt commiſſioner of the treaſury, with the aſſiſtance of other ſelect perſons, and chancellor of our exchequer, having highly recommended himſelf to our royal favour, by his many ſervices to us, to our houſe, and to his own country, we did not think him unworthy to be advanced to the rank of the peers of this realm; but though he rather chuſes to merit the higheſt titles than to wear them, we have however thought fit, in order to ennoble his family, to confer on the ſon the honour due to the father, and to raiſe to the peerage Robert Walpole, junior, eſquire, &c *."

Chapter 24. 1723 to 1724.

His ſon created a baron.

The deaths of Stanhope and Sunderland ſeemed to remove all obſtacles to the power of Townſhend and Walpole, who now became the great leaders of the Whigs, and being ſtrictly united both in blood and intereſt, concentered in themſelves the favour of the crown, and the confidence of their party. Yet notwithſtanding theſe auſpicious appearances, their authority was by no means eſtabliſhed on a firm foundation; for beſides the oppoſition, they had to ſtruggle againſt lord Carte-

* Tindal, vol. 19. p. 494.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

ret, who covered, under the appearance of devotion and friendſhip, inimical deſigns, and united great talents with the moſt aſpiring ambition.

Character and views of Carteret.

John lord Carteret, was ſon of George lord Carteret, by lady Grace, daughter of John, the laſt earl of Bath, of the line of Granville. He was born in 1690, and ſucceeded his father in the title when he was only in the fifth year of his age; he was educated at Weſtminſter ſchool, and removed from thence to Chriſt Church College Oxford. He made ſuch an extraordinary progreſs in his claſſical ſtudies as induced Swift to reproach him, in his humorous ſtile of panegyric, with having carried away from Oxford, more Greek, Latin, and philoſophy than became a perſon of his rank *. To claſſical erudition he united a knowledge of the modern languages, and every ſpecies of polite literature. He had no ſooner taken his ſeat in the houſe of peers, than he diſtinguiſhed himſelf by an ardent zeal for the Proteſtant ſucceſſion, and on the acceſſion of George the Firſt was appointed lord of the bed-chamber.

On the ſchiſm of the Whig miniſtry, in 1717, he attached himſelf to Sunderland; was appointed, in 1719, embaſſador extraordinary at Stockholm, concluded the peace between Sweden, Hanover, and Pruſſia, which finally annexed Bremen and Verden to the electorate of Hanover; and mediated a reconciliation between Sweden and Denmark. Soon after his return to England, he

* Vindication of Lord Carteret, from the charge of favouring none but Tories, Swift's Works, vol. 10. p. 334.

was

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was promoted, on the death of Craggs, to the poſt of ſecretary of ſtate for the Southern department, and divided in the cabinet with Sunderland, to whom he owed his elevation, againſt Townſhend and Walpole. He was eſteemed one of the moſt eminent ſpeakers in the houſe of lords, for dignity of manner, propriety of elocution, and force of argument, although his diction was often cenſured as too florid and metaphorical. He acquired great favour with the king, by his capacity for buſineſs and indefatigable application; by his perfect knowledge of foreign affairs; by the facility with which he converſed in French, Italian, and Spaniſh, and by an acquaintance with the German, which he ſtudied with a view to ingratiate himſelf ſtill farther with his ſovereign. Chapter 24. 1723 to 1724.

On the death of Sunderland, he ſeems to have heſitated whether he ſhould form, in conjunction with Cadogan and Carleton, a party ſeparate from that of Townſhend and Walpole, or coaleſce with thoſe miniſters. He was more particularly uſeful at this juncture, becauſe he had ſucceeded to the influence which earl Stanhope poſſeſſed in the cabinet of Verſailles, by means of du Bois, who was gratified with a large penſion, and who had been raiſed, by the artful management of the earl of Stair, to the office of miniſter for foreign affairs. Du Bois was no ſooner nominated to this poſt, than he contrived to appropriate to himſelf the management of the moſt ſecret tranſactions. All affairs of importance paſſed through his hands alone; His influence with du Bois.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

alone; and the members of the respective councils were dismissed *. Stair, who had conducted the negotiations at Paris with great address, having quarrelled with Law, who then directed the affairs of finance, and in conjunction with du Bois governed the regent, Stanhope himself repaired to Paris, and arranged in person with the regent and du Bois, the plan of future intercourse and correspondence. Stair was recalled, and succeeded by Sir Robert Sutton †. The failure of the Mississippi scheme, which reduced France to a state of bankruptcy, and the disgrace of Law, increased the ascendancy of du Bois, and his nomination to the archbishopric of Cambray, was furthered by the express interposition of George the First ‡.

On the death of earl Stanhope, du Bois was under great alarm, lest the new ministers should not treat him with the same confidence; and was fully aware that his credit with the regent would cease, if the good understanding which had been recently maintained between England and France should be diminished. He was, however, soon undeceived; lord Townshend, the new secretary of state, expressed his resolution in a letter § to du Bois, of maintaining the friendship between the two kingdoms, and paid particular compliments to him, as the person who had first promoted and

* Memoires de Du Clos, tom. 1. p. 408.
† Hardwicke State Papers, vol. 2. passim.
‡ Du Clos.
§ Townshend Papers.

concluded

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concluded the alliance, which had been ſo highly beneficial to both parties.

Chapter 24. 1723 to 1724.

Sends Sir Luke Schaub to Paris.

On the death of Craggs, and the removal of Sunderland, the apprehenſions of du Bois were again revived and increaſed by the reports of diſunion in the Britiſh cabinet, and by exaggerated accounts of the deſperate ſtate of affairs in England, from the failure of the South Sea ſcheme; the regent alſo experienced the ill effects of theſe rumours, from the violent oppoſition made to his meaſures by the parliament of Paris, in conjunction with thoſe who conſidered the alliance with England as no leſs diſhonourable than detrimental. For the purpoſe of removing theſe alarms, Sir Luke Schaub was deputed to Paris by Carteret. Schaub was a native of Baſil, and became the confidential ſecretary of earl Stanhope, through whom his firſt correſpondence and connections with du Bois were principally conducted. On the reconciliation with Spain, in 1719, he was ſent to Madrid, where he remained till the arrival of William Stanhope, afterwards earl of Harrington. Soon after his return to England, he repaired to Hanover, and was employed by earl Stanhope in keeping up the harmony * between the two courts, and diſpelling the doubts and ſuſpicions which occaſionally prevailed on both ſides. On the death of Stanhope, he was conſidered by Carteret as the fitteſt perſon to repair to Paris.

* Correſpondence between Lord Carteret and Sir Luke Schaub, Hardwicke Papers, May 1722.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

The arrival of Schaub gave great ſatisfaction to du Bois, who placed no reliance on Sir Robert Sutton; and who expreſſed a conviction, that he ſhould not long maintain his credit with the regent, if the confidence which that prince had hitherto repoſed on the king of England ſhould be deſtroyed. Schaub eaſily convinced the regent of the king's ſteadineſs to his former engagements, and thus ſupported the authority of du Bois. Sutton was ſoon afterwards recalled, Schaub ſolely managed the affairs of England, and his influence increaſed, as du Bois was ſucceſſively created, by the interpoſition of England, cardinal and prime miniſter. During theſe tranſactions, Schaub became the channel through whom the cabals of the Jacobites, and the intrigues of Atterbury were communicated to the Britiſh cabinet.

Du Bois transferred his devotion to Carteret, as the miniſter who was ſupported by Sunderland, and who boaſted that he had ſucceeded to the influence as well as to the principles of Stanhope: Schaub deſcribed him as the perſon who principally directed fc eign affairs; and the friendſhip of du Bois, whoſe good-will at this period was highly prized, increaſed the conſequence and promoted the intereſt of Carteret.

On the death of Sunderland, du Bois offered, through Schaub, to uſe his intereſt with George the Firſt in favour of Carteret, but ſtrongly adviſed him to coaleſce with Townſhend and Walpole, becauſe he would on one ſide find it difficult to place himſelf at the head of the Whigs, and on the

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the other, it would be dangerous to throw the king into the arms of the Tories *. In reply to these offers of assistance, Carteret expressed his gratitude to the cardinal, and informed Schaub, that he had previously resolved to act in that manner, as well with a view to promote the king's service as his own particular interest. He boasted that he was sufficiently strong to have no apprehensions but those which arise from the common danger to which ministers are subject; he added, that his principles would never change, and intreated him to convince the cardinal, that were he not fully persuaded of the good intentions of his colleagues, he would not continue long united with them †. Chapter 24. 1723 to 1724.

Notwithstanding these professions, Carteret never cordially coalesced with Townshend and Walpole; he considered himself as succeeding to the interests of Sunderland and Stanhope, expressed, in his letters and conversation, the profoundest veneration for their memory, headed the remnant of their party in the British cabinet, and caballed with the leaders of the Tories, whom he confidently assured of success, by declaring that he was supported by those who governed the king. He was led to make this declaration, which he implicitly believed, because he had secured the concurrence of Bothmar and Bernsdorf, and had gained the countess of Darlington, and her sister-in-law, the countess of Platen, whose influence in the Ha- Carteret forms a division in the cabinet.

* Correspondence between Lord Carteret and Sir Luke Schaub, Hardwicke Papers, May 1722.

† May 4, 1723. Hardwicke Papers.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

noverian councils he conſidered as predominant. With a view of effecting his purpoſe, he adopted a propoſal, made by Schaub, of a marriage between Amalia, daughter of the counteſs of Platen, and the count de St. Florentin, ſon of the marquis de la Vrilliere, ſecretary of ſtate, which was arranged under the condition, that George the Firſt ſhould obtain from the duke of Orleans, through the means of cardinal du Bois, a dukedom for the family of la Vrilliere. The king eagerly favoured the ſcheme, and likewiſe commiſſioned Schaub to uſe his name, provided he was ſecure that the requeſt would not be rejected, and that du Bois could facilitate the grant of the dukedom, without offending thoſe families who aſpired to the ſame honour.

Promotes the views of the counteſs of Platen.

Having thus obtained the concurrence of the king, Carteret entertained the moſt ſanguine expectations, that the management of this ſecret tranſaction, confined to him and Schaub, would increaſe his influence in the cabinet; yet as it was ſoon known to many perſons, he was alarmed leſt ſome rumours ſhould be circulated, and he communicated a part of the buſineſs to lord Townſhend, but contrived to retain the negotiation entirely in his own hands. With that view he deſired Schaub to confine the confidential account to his private correſpondence, and in his oſtenſible letters, to touch upon that affair only in general terms, and to do it in ſuch a manner and with ſuch a *naiveté* as ſhould make it appear as if he had not received any particular order on that

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ſubject *. Theſe private communications were conſtantly ſhewn to the king, who expreſſed his ſatisfaction in the higheſt terms of approbation.

Promotes vigorous meaſures againſt Ruſſia.

Carteret alſo drew from the aſpect of northern affairs, high expectations of increaſing his influence, by fomenting the king's reſentment againſt Ruſſia, by flattering his inclination to interfere in the affairs of Sweden, and by favouring the opinions of thoſe Hanoverian miniſters, whoſe advice appeared to him to have weight in the councils of the German cabinet.

Since the treaty of Nyſtadt, which reſtored peace to the North, the only ſubject of alarm, on the ſide of Hanover, was derived from the ſupport which the Czar gave to the duke of Holſtein, both in his attempts to obtain the crown of Sweden, and to recover the duchy of Sleſwic. Peter, proudly conſcious of his ſtrength and reſources, and of the formidable marine which he had created in the Baltic, formed the moſt extenſive deſigns of aggrandiſement, and promoted every meaſure which might embarraſs George the Firſt. He had aſſumed the title of Emperor, which the European powers refuſed to acknowledge. He affianced his daughter Anne †, whom he probably deſigned for his ſucceſſor, to the duke of Holſtein, and ſent to Copenhagen an embaſſador, to require that Sleſwic ſhould be reſtored to the duke of Holſtein, and that his ſubjects, in the provinces conquered from Sweden, ſhould be exempted from the payment of

* May 4, 1722. Hardwicke Papers.

† See Travels in Ruſſia, Book 4, chap. 10.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727. 1721.

the Sound duties. When Frederic the Fourth rejected theſe demands, Peter fitted out a naval armament, aſſembled a body of troops on the frontiers of Courland *; and a new war ſeemed on the point of being kindled in the North. George the Firſt, who by the treaty of Travendahl, had been conſtituted a guarantee of Sleſwic, was bound to ſuccour his ally Frederic; he accordingly concerted the moſt efficacious means of defence; an Engliſh ſquadron again appeared in the Baltic, and joining the Daniſh fleet, ſuſpended the operations of Ruſſia, and Peter afterwards turned his views to Sweden, where the weakneſs of the government, and the fury of contending factions, gave him the faireſt proſpects of ſucceſs.

Arrival of the king at Hanover.

Such was the general ſtate of Carteret's hopes and intrigues, when the king repaired to Hanover. Townſhend had not forgotten that his removal, in 1716, had been principally owing to his continuance in England, by which means a full ſcope was given to the cabals of Sunderland, and the Hanoverian junto. He was unwilling to fall again into the ſame error, and accompanied the king. Although it was unuſual for both ſecretaries of ſtate to be abſent at the ſame time, yet Carteret had rendered himſelf ſo agreeable, and his preſence was thought ſo neceſſary for carrying on the negotiation with Schaub, for the marriage and the dukedom, that he received orders to repair to Hanover, and Walpole was appointed to act as ſole

* Mallet, Hiſt. de Dannemarc.

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secretary of state in England, during the king's absence. Chapter 14. 1723 to 1724.

Soon after their arrival at Hanover, the two secretaries of state made a violent struggle for pre-eminence. Struggle between Townshend and Carteret.

Townshend had a difficult and a delicate part to act. He was conscious of Carteret's eminent abilities, and of his high favour with the king; he was not ignorant of his successful intrigues with Bernsdorf and Bothmar, and of having conciliated lady Darlington and the countess of Platen, whose influence he sufficiently appreciated; he was aware that Carteret was eagerly inclined to promote the king's German measures, and that he would be seconded in all his schemes, by the powerful co-operation of the Hanoverian ministers. He felt the necessity of employing intrigue against intrigue, and manœuvre against manœuvre; he laboured effectually to secure the duchess of Kendal, whose ascendancy over the king, fatal experience had demonstrated to be predominant; he fomented the jealousy which she had long entertained, lest the projected marriage should furnish the countess of Platen with a pretence for going to Paris, and from thence to England, and he succeeded so far in gaining her good graces, that he calls her, in his most private letter to Walpole, "the good duchess, and their fast friend". He also obtained the concurrence of lady Walsingham, who possessed great influence over the duchess, and no inconsiderable favour with the king. Relying on these supports, he procured the disgrace of Bernsdorf, Townshend gains the duchess of Kendal.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

and rendered ineffectual the intrigues of Bothmar, who made an unexpected visit to Hanover with a view of aiding Carteret. He obtained the appointment of Hartenberg to the post of minister of state; broke the union which had hitherto subsisted between him and the duchess of Kendal, and rendered them both subservient to his views. He counteracted Carteret in all his measures, obtained the nomination of several places in opposition to his particular recommendation, and so triumphantly carried all before him, that he boasted, in a letter to Walpole, of the success of his political campaign at Hanover, which, in stating the difficulty of his situation, he described as the only place in the world where faction and intrigue are natural and in fashion *.

The superior influence, however, of Townshend and Walpole, was not solely gained by court intrigues, or by the corruption of German favourites, and was not prostituted by a preference of Hanoverian interests to those of England. In the midst of these cabals, the conduct of the brother ministers was firm and manly, moving in direct opposition to the king's prejudices, and the wishes of the German junto. Townshend prevented the adoption of violent measures against Russia, proposed by Bernsdorf and seconded by Carteret, which if pursued, must have involved England in hostilities with the Czar; and he exultingly informed Walpole, that the king continued true to

* See Correspondence.

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his reſolution of ſigning no paper relating to Britiſh affairs, but in his preſence. Chapter 24. 1723 to 1724.

The continuance of their authority was alſo greatly owing to the proſperous ſtate of domeſtic affairs. The revival of the national credit, and the tranquillity eſtabliſhed by the ſuppreſſion of Atterbury's plot, which reflected great honour on the ſagacity and ſpirit of the miniſters, and gave weight and dignity to the councils of England in all parts of Europe, made a deep impreſſion on the mind of the king; and it reflects high honour both on the ſovereign of whom it was ſaid, and on the miniſters by whom it was ſaid, that the only method of preſerving their power beyond fear of competition or accident, was to form ſome ſalutary plan for the eaſe of the people and the benefit of trade, which points the king had much at heart *.

The character and conduct of Walpole, were no leſs inſtrumental in forwarding the triumph of his party. The beneficial conſequences reſulting from his commercial regulations had been too obvious to eſcape notice; his genius for financial operations, and the eaſe with which he obtained parliamentary ſupplies, had induced the king to ſay that Walpole could create gold out of nothing †. But he did not earn this confidence by mean conceſſions and baſe flattery; on the contrary, he ventured to contradict the wiſhes and prejudices of the king, whenever thoſe wiſhes or prejudices ſeemed to militate againſt the true intereſts of England. An indubi- Aſſiſted by Walpole.

* See Correſpondence, Period III.

† Etough, from Scrope, Correſpondence, Period IV.

table

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Period III. 1720 to 1727. table proof of this fact appears from the correſpondence of this year. The king having requeſted £.200,000 for the purpoſe of oppoſing the efforts of the Czar to dethrone the king of Sweden, and place the duke of Holſtein on the throne, Townſhend ſtrenuouſly exhorted Walpole to procure that ſum. In reply, Walpole declared that the £.200,000 was reſerved for the king's expences, if he ſtaid at Hanover later than Chriſtmas. He muſt, therefore, either return to England ſooner than he had propoſed, or the interference in the Swediſh affairs muſt be relinquiſhed. Walpole at the ſame time repreſented his objections to that interference in the ſtrongeſt terms; explained his own conduct, and the great principle by which he appears to have been uniformly directed, which was to be œconomical of the public money, but to ſpare no expence when the ſecurity of his country was at ſtake; to avoid foreign entanglements, not to be precipitate in contracting new engagemenrs; to feel the pulſe of the nation before any meaſure of conſequence was adopted, and proceed with due caution. He concluded by obſerving, that the proſecution of a new war would effectually prevent the adoption of all ſchemes for the eaſe of the people and the benefit of trade. The king, ſo far from being diſpleaſed with this freedom, was convinced by his arguments, adopted his views, and declared his reſolution of implicitly following the advice of his Britiſh cabinet: He ſpoke of him in the higheſt terms of approbation, and when Townſhend ſhewed his anſwer to that letter, and aſked whether he had not made

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made too many compliments, obſerved, *that was impoſſible, for Walpole never had his equal in buſineſs* *. Chapter 24. 1723 to 1734.

Notwithſtanding, however, theſe evident proofs of Townſhend's and Walpole's aſcendency, reports were induſtriouſly circulated, that Carteret's power was ſuperior; and theſe reports coming by rebound from Hanover, were exaggerated in England and France, and had a conſiderable effect in ſuppreſſing the ardour of their adherents, and in giving ſpirit to the friends of their rival. It became neceſſary therefore to undeceive the public, and (as Townſhend obſerved, in a letter to Walpole) to obtain ſome *overt act* in their favour; it was accordingly determined to attack Carteret in his ſtrong hold of Paris, where he ſuppoſed himſelf invincible.

As the union with France was at this juncture eſteemed highly neceſſary to preſerve the peace of Europe, and the internal tranquillity of England, thoſe miniſters who had the higheſt credit with the court of Verſailles, were held in the higheſt eſtimation by George the Firſt. Hence it became a matter of great concern for Townſhend and Walpole to have their own confidential embaſſador at Paris, which was now the center of the ſecret negotiations for all foreign affairs, and by theſe means to prevent their opponent from preſerving his weight in the cabinet, which he principally derived from the ſuppoſed credit of his creature, Sir Luke Schaub. It was their intereſt therefore to obtain

* Correſpondence, Period III.

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his removal, and to ſubſtitute ſome perſon in whom they could place implicit confidence, and whoſe appointment ſhould prove to the court of France, and convince both friends and adverſaries in England, of their aſcendency in the cabinet.

Miſſion of Horace Walpole to Paris.

Horace Walpole was ſelected as the fitteſt perſon to bring forward on this occaſion. He had from his earlieſt years been trained to buſineſs, under Stanhope, in Spain; under Carleton, when chancellor of the exchequer and ſecretary of ſtate; under Townſhend, at the congreſs of Gertruydenberg, and during the negotiation for the barrier treaty in 1710. At the acceſſion of George the Firſt, he was appointed ſecretary to lord Townſhend, and afterwards ſecretary to the treaſury; and, as envoy to the States General, had conducted with great ſkill and ability the complicated negotiations which took place at the Hague in 1715 and 1716. On the removal of Townſhend and Walpole, he had continued invariably attached to them. At the coalition with Sunderland, in 1720, he had been nominated ſecretary to the duke of Grafton, then lord lieutenant of Ireland, and in 1721 ſecretary to the treaſury. He was deputed, in 1722, as envoy to the Hague, which poſt he now filled with great credit and dignity, and was particularly noticed by George the Firſt as a man of buſineſs and addreſs.

As Townſhend could not propoſe the miſſion of Horace Walpole to Paris, without an open quarrel with Carteret, to whoſe province, as the ſecretary for the ſouthern department, that appointment belonged,

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longed, he took advantage of the death of cardinal du Bois, which happened at this time, to carry his ſcheme gradually into execution. He repreſented to the king, that this event rendered it neceſſary to ſend a confidential perſon to Paris, for the purpoſe of gaining authentic information concerning the ſituation of affairs, and to aſcertain whether Schaub was not at variance with count Nocé, who was ſuppoſed to govern the duke of Orleans. He named Horace Walpole as proper to be intruſted with ſo delicate an affair, and ſuggeſted, that he might affect to take Paris in his way to Hanover, from a motive of mere curioſity *.

Chapter 24. 1723 to 1724.

Having ſucceeded in this point, Townſhend ſuggeſted that letters credential, under the pretence of ſending a full power to accept the acceſſion of the king of Portugal to the quadruple alliance, would facilitate the execution of the commiſſion. The king approved this hint, and propoſed it as his own thought to Carteret, who, though confounded at this mortification, could not venture to make any objection †.

Under theſe circumſtances, Horace Walpole arrived at Paris on the 19th of October, and on the 1ſt of November, wrote ſo maſterly a diſpatch ‡, deſcribing the ſituation of the court of France, the characters of the duke of Orleans, and of the principal miniſters, as charmed the king, delighted his

Conteſt between Horace Walpole and Schaub.

* See Lord Townſhend's Letters in September and October. Correſpondence, 1723.

† Ibid.

‡ Walpole Papers.

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friends, and gave a ſure omen of the victory which he was to obtain over Schaub, and conſequently of that which his brother and Townſhend would gain over Carteret. He particularly dwelt on Nocé's averſion to Schaub, on his refuſal to liſten to any overtures of reconciliation, and on the influence which he poſſeſſed over the duke of Orleans; circumſtances artfully diſplayed to prove the neceſſity of appointing an envoy who might ſecure the good will of Nocé. Before the arrival of this diſpatch at Hanover, Schaub had written, that the duke of Orleans was inclined to gratify the king, in conferring a dukedom on the family of la Vrilliere, and forwarded copies of letters which he had concerted with Morville, and which the king was to ſend to Louis the Fifteenth, and the duke of Orleans, preſſing them in the ſtrongeſt manner to comply with that requeſt. Carteret, in a tranſport of joy, informed Schaub, that the king had approved the letters, and had tranſcribed that to Louis the Fifteenth with his own hand. He warned him however, not to deliver them, unleſs he was ſure of ſucceſs, and entreated him to forward the anſwer from the king of France as ſoon as poſſible. At the ſame time Townſhend himſelf informed Walpole, that the affair of the dukedom was concluded, and that the marriage would ſoon take place. He added, that the ducheſs of Kendall already began to be jealous of the counteſs of Platen, and hinted, that through her influence, it might be practicable to eſtabliſh Horace Walpole as embaſſador at the court of France. The accounts, however, tranſmitted

Nov. 21. 1723.

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mitted by Horace Walpole, were of a very different complexion. He maintained unequivocally, that Schaub was totally miſtaken, and had promiſed more than he could effect. His diſpatches and private letters were filled with repreſentations of Schaub's petulant and indiſcreet behaviour, in preſſing the grant; of the violent oppoſition made by the principal nobles, of their bitter and ſarcaſtic reproaches againſt the interference of a Britiſh miniſter, or rather as they termed him, *no miniſter*, to obtain a dukedom for a family which was not entitled to ſuch a diſtinction. He ſtated that Morville, tauntingly alluding to Schaub as a foreigner, ſaid that he was happy to tranſact buſineſs with one who was a *true Engliſhman*. He detailed a ſecret and confidential converſation which he had with the duke of Orleans, who after obſerving that he had requeſted to ſee him, for the purpoſe of converſing frankly on an affair of great importance; plainly indicated that he could give no credit to the repreſentations of Schaub, whoſe zeal in this whole buſineſs, had originated from his attachment to Madame de la Vrilliere, with whom he was engaged in a love intrigue. The duke then mentioned the impropriety of granting a dukedom to that family; obſerved that the king was not fully appriſed of the difficulties attending it; and requeſted Horace Walpole to write to lord Townſhend for authentic information concerning his majeſty's real ſentiments. Chapter 24. 1723 to 1724.

The day after this audience, the duke of Orleans died, and the duke of Bourbon was appointed prime Death of the duke of Orleans.

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prime miniſter. Schaub paid court to, and was well received by Madame de Prie, miſtreſs of the duke of Bourbon, who favoured the grant from intereſted motives; and he wrote to Carteret the moſt exaggerated accounts of his influence over the new prime miniſter, and of his certain ſucceſs in the affair of the dukedom. Carteret again believed theſe favourable accounts; and was again deceived.

Horace Walpole acted with great dignity and judgment. He paid no ſervile attention to Madame de Prie, from a conviction that it was not neceſſary; behaved with deference to the duke of Bourbon, but privately courted the biſhop of Frejus, afterwards cardinal Fleury, whoſe intereſt with the young king of France, he ſaw and appreciated, and whoſe confidence he gained by his prudent conduct. Although the new prime miniſter, from a deſire of gratifying Madame de Prie, who wiſhed to eſtabliſh a precedent in favour of her huſband's claims to a dukedom, was more inclined to forward the grant than his predeceſſor, yet the loud clamours of the nobility, and the decided averſion of Louis the Fifteenth to the meaſure, convinced him of its impracticability. Schaub was either ignorant of this circumſtance, or affected to be ſo. Anxious to carry a point, on the ſucceſs of which Carteret's aſcendency in the cabinet, and his own continuance at Paris ſeemed ultimately to depend, and eager to gratify Madame de la Vrilliere, he preſſed the duke of Bourbon, with his uſual indiſcretion, remonſtrated againſt the delay as inſulting

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ſulting to the king of England, and endeavoured to involve it in ſuch a manner with public tranſactions as to make it a ſtate affair.

The duke of Bourbon, embarraſſed with theſe ſolicitations, now applied to Horace Walpole in the ſame manner as his predeceſſor had done. He obſerved that the difficulties were inſuperable, gave a true ſtate of the affair as it related to his own ſituation, and the French king's ſentiments upon it; declared that the king, as well as the late duke of Orleans, had been deceived and impoſed upon, and concluded with ſome expreſſions of reſentment and contempt at Schaub's conduct and importunity*.

Prudent conduct of Horace Walpole.

Horace Walpole received private inſtructions from lord Townſhend and his brother to proceed with great caution, and to act in ſuch a manner as not to diſguſt the French cabinet, by preſſing ſo diſagreeable a requeſt, and yet not to offend the king by appearing as if he was oppoſing his wiſhes. He followed theſe inſtructions with conſummate addreſs; and the accounts of his proceedings, which were ſhewn to the king, increaſed the good opinion already entertained of his talents for negotiation, proved the influence he was rapidly acquiring in the cabinet of Verſailles, and tended to diminiſh the credit of Carteret and Schaub. The king, on his return to England, convinced that he had been deceived by Schaub, and that the obſtacles to the grant were inſuperable, reluctantly withdrew his

* Horace Walpole to Lord Townſhend, March 7, 1724. Walpole Papers.

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ſolicitation. Carteret had the unwelcome taſk of commanding Schaub not to preſs the affair any farther, and of incloſing a letter * from the king to the duke of Bourbon, declaring that it never was his intention to make the dukedom a ſtate affair, and declining to inſiſt on a requeſt which was diſagreeable to the king of France and the prime miniſter. Carteret, however, was ſtill ſo convinced of his ſuperior favour, that he either diſbelieved, or affected to diſbelieve the reports of his declining influence. He filled his letters to Schaub with repeated declarations, that the king approved their conduct; exhorted him to be perfectly tranquil, and to bear all mortifications, until the affair of the dukedom ſhould be finiſhed; expreſſed his full conviction that they ſhould maintain their ground, and that his own authority was ſtronger than ever; yet at the very time his own fall and the removal of Schaub were evident, from the appointment of Horace Walpole to be envoy extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the court of Verſailles. The additional honour thus conferred increaſed the jealouſy of Schaub, who found all the aſſurances of his patron belied, and himſelf in danger of being recalled from Paris. But even this mortification did not induce Carteret to acknowledge the ſuperiority of his rivals; he ſtill gave Schaub the ſtrongeſt aſſurances of ſupport from the king; adviſed him to attach himſelf to the duke of Bourbon and Madame de Prie; he declared, that

* Walpole Papers, January 26, 1724.

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the king was ſecretly inclined in his favour, but that he did not love diſputes, and was unwilling to require ſuch explanations as would force him to take a decided part. He obſerved, that the anſwer to the duke of Bourbon could by no means be interpreted, as if the king abandoned his requeſt of the dukedom, although he did not deſire that it might be conſidered as a public affair. Chapter 14. 1725 to 1730.

Carteret perhaps had ſufficient reaſon to be ſecure of his victory, as well becauſe he was perſonally a favorite with the king, as becauſe he was joined by a formidable combination of men who poſſeſſed great weight and conſequence. Amongſt the members of the cabinet who acted with him, was William earl of Cadogan, who had concentred in himſelf the poſts of commander in chief, and maſter of the ordnance, and who was ſupported by the friends and adherents of his deceaſed patron, John duke of Marlborough, particularly by the ducheſs, whoſe enormous wealth enabled her occaſionally to forward or obſtruct the public loans, and who was highly offended with Walpole, for preſuming to raiſe money at a leſs intereſt than ſhe had required. Cadogan was frank, open, vehement, impatient of contradiction, and inclined, in caſe of difficulties, rather to cut the gordian knot with his ſword, than attempt by patience to unravel its intricacy. He was in high favour with the king for his knowledge of foreign languages, his acquaintance with foreign manners, and for an eaſe and addreſs which was partly derived from an early intercourſe with the world, and partly from Character of Cadogan.

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an intermixture of military and civil occupations. At this criſis, Cadogan had rendered himſelf ſo obnoxious to Walpole, that it was determined to open the political campaign with his diſmiſſion, which was to be a prelude to other changes. The poſt of commander in chief had been promiſed to lord Cobham, and the maſterſhip of the ordnance to the duke of Argyle; but the king gave a decided negative to this propoſal, by declaring that he would not part with Cadogan. As this attack was made at the opening of the ſeſſion, when the predominant influence of Walpole in the houſe of commons, ſeemed to countenance an opinion, that his demands muſt be complied with; this repulſe was conſidered by the friends of Carteret and Cadogan, as the ſure omen of his downfal.

Efforts of Carteret.

In the midſt of theſe diviſions in the cabinet, the affairs in Ireland, relating to Wood's patent, gave Carteret an opportunity of impreſſing the king with unfavourable ſentiments of Walpole, to whoſe miſconduct he principally imputed theſe diſturbances. He fomented the diſcontents in Ireland, and caballed with the Brodricks, who were incenſed againſt the duke of Grafton, lord lieutenant, for aſcribing the oppoſition ſolely to the ſecret manœuvres of lord chancellor Midleton, and for inſiſting, that either he ſhould be deprived of the ſeals, or ſhould not be appointed one of the lords juſtices *. Their diſcontent was no leſs ve-

* See Chapter 26th on the Diſturbances in Ireland.

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hement againſt Walpole, who ſupported the duke of Grafton; and Carteret increaſed their conſequence, by enumerating to the king the ſervices which the family had performed in favour of his ſucceſſion, by exaggerating their influence in Ireland, and by dwelling on the ill conſequences which would reſult from depriving lord Midleton of the ſeals. Theſe commotions, although finally quelled by the prudence and ability of Walpole, yet gave great embarraſſment to his adminiſtration, and delayed the removal of Carteret. Chapter 24. 1723 to 1724.

Walpole baffled his adverſaries with the ſame arts which they endeavoured to employ againſt him. Bolingbroke had betrayed to him the intrigues of Carteret with the Tories, and had made offers from ſome of their leaders to join adminiſtration; although Walpole rejected theſe overtures, and declined a general coalition with them, yet he detached ſeveral from the party, and amuſed others. He gained a great acceſſion of ſtrength by ſecuring lord Harcourt, whom he introduced into the privy council, gratified with an increaſe of his penſion, and for whom he obtained the appointment of one of the lords juſtices during the king's abſence. By theſe means the leaders of the diſaffected party were allured with hopes of ſimilar honours and emoluments, if they would follow the ſame example; and highly diſſatisfied with Carteret, made little oppoſition to the meaſures of government; flattering themſelves that his removal would be ſoon followed by their introduction into power. To theſe expectations may Baffled by Walpole.

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he partly attributed the extreme tranquillity which diſtinguiſhed the next ſeſſion of parliament.

1724. Parliamentary proceedings.

While this ſtruggle for power was carrying on in the interior of the cabinet, public affairs were conducted with unexampled proſperity and quiet. The parliament met on the 9th of January; the ſpeech from the throne concluded with dignified expreſſions of the connection between the liberty and proſperity of the nation. "In the preſent happy ſituation of our affairs, I have nothing more to recommend to you, than that you would make uſe of the opportunity, which your own good conduct has put into your hands, in conſidering of ſuch farther laws as may be wanting for the eaſe and encouragement of trade and navigation, for the employment of the poor, and for exciting and encouraging a ſpirit of induſtry in the nation. I am fully ſatisfied, that the trade and wealth of my people, are the happy effects of the liberties they enjoy, and that the grandeur of the crown conſiſts in their proſperity."

The addreſs paſſed not only without a ſingle diſſenting voice, but even without a debate; and during the whole ſeſſion the only motion that occaſioned a diviſion, was one for keeping up the ſame number of troops for 1724, as was maintained the year before, which was carried by a majority of 240 againſt 100. On the 24th of April, this ſeſſion, ſo tranquil in effect, and ſo barren of incidents, was cloſed by a ſpeech which commended in high terms of approbation, the unanimity, cheerfulneſs, and diſpatch with which the buſi-

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nefs had been conducted, and expreſſed the higheſt ſatisfaction, that the ſame force was maintained by ſea and land, which had enabled the nation to hold among the powers of Europe, the rank and figure due to her honour and dignity, without laying any new or additional burthen on the people *.

Influence of Walpole.

The unexampled unanimity and diſpatch of buſineſs which diſtinguiſhed this ſeſſion, was almoſt ſolely owing to the good management of Walpole, and to his influence in the houſe of commons, which Saint John Brodrick, in a letter to lord Middleton, calls *prodigious* †. Hence his preponderance increaſed in the cabinet; and the king was induced to take a decided reſolution in his favour. As a prelude to the removal of Carteret, Horace Walpole was named embaſſador to Paris. Yet ſuch was the credit of Carteret, that this nomination was not finally effected without great difficulty. His addreſs ſtill ſupplied proofs of his influence, when it had almoſt totally declined; and Horace Walpole, in his private letters to his brother and Townſhend, made no leſs heavy complaints of his ſituation at Paris, than Schaub did of his diſguſts to Carteret ‡. The diſpatches, though written to him and Schaub jointly, were by private intimations to the meſſenger, carried firſt to Schaub, and communicated by him to the French miniſters, before Horace Walpole was in-

Horace Walpole named embaſſador to Paris.

* Journals. Chandler.

† Correſpondence.

‡ Correſpondence, January 5th, 1723.

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formed of their contents; the diſpatches for Spain, and the plenipotentiaries, at the congreſs of Cambray, were encloſed to him, peruſed by him, and forwarded by him. Of this meaſure, Horace Walpole bitterly complained to his brother, declared his reſolution not to act any longer jointly with Schaub, inſiſted that one of them muſt be recalled; and juſtly obſerved, that the removal or continuance of Schaub, muſt prove to the world, either the full eſtabliſhment or decline of their credit with the king. Walpole and Townſhend now found it neceſſary to exert all their influence, and to employ the utmoſt addreſs *. They commiſſioned Horace Walpole to write an oſtenſible letter to lord Townſhend, in which he ſhould draw the character of Sir Luke Schaub, ſtate the impropriety of his conduct, and the diſadvantage which was derived to the king's affairs, by maintaining two miniſters at Paris with divided authority, and inſiſt on his own reſignation, rather than continue in a ſituation in which he was perpetually thwarted and oppoſed.

Schaub recalled.

This letter was ſhewn to the king, and had its due effect. He directed that Schaub ſhould be immediately recalled, and Townſhend himſelf conveyed the orders to Carteret. But on the evening of the day in which the communication was

* This account of the intrigues of Carteret and Schaub at Paris, and the counter intrigues of Horace Walpole and the brother miniſters, is drawn from Sir Luke Schaub's Papers, in the poſſeſſion of the earl of Hardwicke, and from the diſpatches and letters to and from Horace Walpole, in the Orford and Townſhend Papers. The moſt intereſting of which will appear in the Walpole Correſpondence.

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made, Carteret prevailed on the king to ſuſpend the orders for a precipitate recal of Schaub, and was permitted to ſend him word that the king deemed his preſence in England neceſſary for his ſervice, and that he might return to Paris for the ſolemnization of the marriage between the Count de St. Florentin, and the young counteſs of Platen. Chapter 24. 1723 to 1724.

In obtaining this point, Carteret had another object in view, beſides ſoftening the diſgrace of Schaub, and mortifying his rival; it was to ſend him back to Paris, with a commiſſion, which would have rendered his preſence more neceſſary, and finally occaſioned the removal of Horace Walpole. This ſcheme was no leſs than to propoſe a treaty of marriage between the young king of France and the princeſs Anne, the eldeſt daughter of the prince of Wales. It was concerted between Carteret and the counteſs of Darlington at London, Sir Luke Schaub, Madame de la Vrilliere and Madame de Prie at Paris, and the counteſs of Platen at Hanover. Sir Luke Schaub had the indiſcretion to make the propoſal to the king, in his audience, but it was received with ſuch marks of diſſatisfaction, as gave Townſhend and Walpole an opportunity to remonſtrate againſt his preſumption, and repreſent to the king the great diſadvantage which would reſult to his affairs in France, if ſo indiſcreet a perſon ſhould be ſent back as his miniſter. Schaub was therefore only permitted to return for the purpoſe of aſſiſting at the Count de St. Florentin's marriage. The king Fall of Carteret.

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king gave a portion of £. 10,000 to the bride, but no dukedom was conferred on the family of la Vrilliere. Schaub was then recalled from Paris, and Horace Walpole received his credentials of embaſſador from the duke of Newcaſtle, appointed ſecretary of ſtate in the place of Carteret, who was conſtituted lord lieutenant of Ireland. The duke of Grafton was made lord chamberlain; Henry Pelham, brother of the duke of Newcaſtle, and the confidential friend of Walpole, was nominated ſecretary at war; and many of Walpole's friends were placed in the ſubordinate poſts of government.

Changes in the miniſtry.

Aſcendency of Townſhend and Walpole.

Thus terminated the conteſt between Carteret and the brother miniſters; and though the victory was not as complete as they expected, becauſe they could not obtain the removal of Cadogan, Roxburgh, and Midleton, yet it gave weight to their adminiſtration, and conſiderably diminiſhed the ſtrength of the oppoſing party in the cabinet. Carteret ſupported his defeat with great dignity and firmneſs of mind. He declared, that having no obligations to lord Townſhend for his advancement to the poſt of ſecretary of ſtate, he was reſolved never to have ſubmitted to him in that capacity. He did not affect to conceal his diſſatisfaction at the ill uſage he had received, and particularly complained that Horace Walpole had been ſent to interlope in his province. While he avowed that he was defeated, he declared himſelf happier and eaſier in the ſituation of lord lieutenant, than that of ſecretary of ſtate, expoſed to

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continual mortifications; and profeſſed his reſolution to continue on good terms with the miniſters, and to promote the meaſures of government *. Yet his temper was ſo ſanguine and his ſpirit ſo little depreſſed, that he perſevered in aſſerting, that his favour with the king was greater than ever, that his enemies had gained no real ſtrength by the late alterations †, and, in expectation of a favourable change, delayed, under various pretences, his departure for Ireland, until the month of October, when the neceſſary attendance on the duties of his vice royalty annihilated his hopes. Townſhend and Walpole were now in ſuch high favour, that they prevailed over the king's inclinations, and overcame his jealouſy of the prince of Wales, which, notwithſtanding the apparent reconciliation, continued ſtill unabated, and ſhewed itſelf in repeated refuſals to confer any particular mark of favour on thoſe who were perſonally attached to his ſon. With a view to gratify the prince, and to ſecure the earl of Scarborough, who was his maſter of the horſe, and, next to Sir Spencer Compton, his greateſt favourite, the brother miniſters had promiſed him the garter; and as it was the cuſtom of the king always to retain one vacant ribband, they waited until there were two undiſpoſed of, when Townſhend requeſted one of them for Scarborough.

* Stephen Poyntz to Horace Walpole, April 5th, 1724. Walpole Papers.

† Saint John Brodrick to lord Midleton.—Correſpondence.

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The king ſaid, he could not comply with his requeſt, becauſe it was already conferred; and when Townſhend aſked, with ſome degree of ſurpriſe, who was the perſon? the king anſwered, "I intend it for your lordſhip." Townſhend, after expreſſing a deep ſenſe of his gratitude, begged leave to decline it. The king ſtill inſiſted, and Townſhend ſtill declined. "Lord Scarborough," he replied, "is now at the door of the cloſet, expecting every moment to be called in to thank your majeſty for the honour; he will naturally ſuppoſe that I have deceived him, and that after having left him with a promiſe to intercede in his favour, I have aſked it for myſelf; which will ruin my character as a man of honour and veracity." "Well then," returned the king, "for once I will break through my uſual rule, and will confer both the vacant garters; one ſhall be your's, and the other ſhall be given to lord Scarborough, whom you may now introduce *. Scarborough had accordingly the firſt, and both were inſtalled at the ſame time †.

The king delays his journey to Hanover.

The king gave the ſtrongeſt proof of the full confidence which he placed in Townſhend and Walpole, by ſubmitting to defer his journey to Hanover, even after he had fixed the time of his departure. This change of reſolution was effected

* This anecdote was communicated by lord Sydney. It is mentioned in a different way by Count Broglio, in a letter to Louis the Fifteenth; but he relates it only as a rumour. Correſpondence, 1724.

† Political State.

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by the repreſentations of lord Townſhend, who ſtated in firm, though reſpectful terms, the inconveniences which would reſult from his abſence at this period *. Chapter 24. 1723 to 1724.

The continuance of the king in England had operated in ſuppreſſing public clamours, and in promoting public tranquillity. The parliament, which met on the 12th of November, was opened by a ſpeech from the throne, which dwelt with particular energy and ſatisfaction on the proſperous ſtate of affairs: "Peace with all powers abroad, at home perfect tranquillity, plenty, and an uninterrupted enjoyment of all civil and religious rights, are moſt diſtinguiſhing marks of the favour and protection of divine Providence, and theſe, with all their happy conſequences, will, I doubt not, by the bleſſing of God upon our joint endeavours, be long continued to my people. The ſame proviſion by ſea and land, for the defence and ſafety of the nation, will continue to make us reſpected abroad, and conſequently ſecure at home. The ſame attention to the eaſe and encouragement of trade and navigation, will eſtabliſh credit upon the ſtrongeſt baſis, and raiſe ſuch a ſpirit of induſtry, as will not only enable us gradually to diſcharge the national debt, but will likewiſe greatly increaſe the wealth, power, and influence of this kingdom.———You muſt all be ſenſible how much our preſent happineſs is owing to your union and ſteady conduct; it is Meeting of parliament.

* See Correſpondence.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

therefore wholly unneceſſary to recommend to you unanimity and diſpatch in all your deliberations. The zeal and abilities you have on all occaſions ſhewn, in ſupporting the intereſt of your country, even under the greateſt difficulties, leave no room to doubt of my having your entire and effectual concurrence in every thing that can tend to the ſervice of the public, and to the good of my people *."

This ſeſſion of parliament, no leſs remarkable for the unanimity with which buſineſs was conducted, than for a barrenneſs of important tranſactions, was only diſtinguiſhed by the commencement of Pulteney's oppoſition, the recal of Bolingbroke, events which are noticed in ſubſequent chapters of this work, and by the impeachment of lord Macclesfield, in which Walpole took very little ſhare. It was cloſed on the 31ſt of May.

Walpole created knight of the bath and garter.

A few days before the prorogation of parliament, the order of the Bath was revived, and the miniſter was created a knight, from which period he aſſumed the title of Sir Robert Walpole, and in 1726, he was inſtalled knight of the garter; the value of which diſtinction is greatly enhanced by the conſideration, that excepting admiral Montagu, afterwards earl of Sandwich, he was the only commoner who, ſince the reign of James the Firſt, had been dignified by that order.

On this event he had the honour of being congratulated by the author of the Night Thoughts,

* Chandler.

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in a poem, called the Inſtalment. The poet commences in an exalted ſtrain of panegyric, by invoking the ſhades of the deceaſed knights to deſcend from heaven to aſſiſt at the inauguration of their new compeer: Chapter 24. 1723 to 1724.

Ye mighty dead, ye garter'd ſons of praiſe!
Our morning ſtars! Our boaſt in former days!
Which hov'ring o'er, your purple wings diſplay,
Lur'd by the pomp of this diſtinguiſh'd day,
Stoop and attend: by one the knee be bound;
One, throw the mantle's crimſon folds around;
By that, the ſword on his proud thigh be plac'd,
This, claſp the diamond girdle round his waiſt;
His breaſt, with rays, let juſt Godolphin ſpread;
Wiſe Burleigh plant the plumage on his head;
And Edward own, ſince firſt he fix'd the race,
None preſt fair glory with a ſwifter pace.

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CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIFTH:

1725—1726.

Anecdotes of Henry St. John, Viſcount Bolingbroke.—Diſagreement between him and Oxford.—His Schemes in favour of the Pretender.—Diſgraced on the Acceſſion of George the Firſt.—Flies.—Joins the Pretender.—Appointed his Secretary of State.—Removed.—Cauſes of his Diſmiſſion.—Makes Overtures to the Britiſh Cabinet.—Receives a Promiſe of being reſtored.—Writes his Letter to Sir William Wyndham, under that Suppoſition.—Cenſures Miniſters.—Makes Overtures to them.—Cabals againſt them.—Renews his Offers of Attachment to them.—Conduct of Walpole in his Favour.—Bolingbroke receives his Pardon in Blood.—His Overtures to the Walpoles.—Act of Parliament in his Favour.—Motives for Walpole's Conduct.—Bolingbroke joins Oppoſition.—Remarks on his Conduct and Writings.

Period III. 1720 to 1727.

WHEN Atterbury arrived at Calais, he found Bolingbroke, who had juſt obtained his pardon, waiting for a conveyance to England, on which he expreſſed his ſurpriſe, and exclaimed, "Then I am exchanged!" And well might the biſhop be aſtoniſhed, that a miniſter who had ſecretly caballed to place the Pretender on the throne, and had, ſince his flight, openly engaged in his ſervice, ſhould experience the lenity of government, and be permitted to return to his native country, which he had endeavoured to diſtreſs by ſecret intrigues and open rebellion.

The pardon of Bolingbroke, granted by the king, was ſoon followed by the repeal of the bill of attainder paſſed againſt him in 1716; and Walpole, who had moved for that bill, moved alſo for its repeal; an act of imprudence which he committed

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mitted in oppoſition to the advice of his moſt approved friends, the opinion of ſeveral of the king's miniſters, and in contradiction to his own judgment. I ſhall in this chapter attempt to develope the cauſes which led to this extraordinary event, and explain the reaſons which induced Walpole to take a ſtep, of which he too late repented. This inquiry will be introduced by a few biographical anecdotes, for the purpoſe of connecting the narrative. Chapter 25. 1725 to 1726.

Biographical memoirs of Bolingbroke.

Henry St. John, ſon of Sir Henry St. John, baronet, of Lydiard Tregoze, in Wiltſhire, by Mary, ſecond daughter and heireſs of Robert Rich, earl of Warwick, was born in 1678 *. He received his education at Eton ſchool, and completed it at Chriſt Church, Oxford. He diſtinguiſhed himſelf at a very early period by his talents and exceſſes; and made ſo conſpicuous a figure in the houſe of commons, that in 1704, he was appointed ſecretary at war, by the influence of Harley, to whom he attached himſelf, and with whom he acted under the banner of the Tories. On the removal of Harley, in 1707, St. John reſigned his employments, and followed the fortune of his benefactor. On the diſmiſſion of the Whig adminiſtration, Harley propoſed to reinſtate him in his employment, and expreſſed a deſire to admit ſome

* The age of lord Bolingbroke is erroneouſly ſtated by his biographer, and by Collins, both of whom ſay he died in 1751, in his 79th year, which places his birth in 1673. It appears from one of his letters to Sir William Wyndham, dated *New year's day* 1738, in which he ſays "nine months hence I ſhall be three-ſcore." (Egremont Papers.)

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

of the moſt moderate Whigs into the adminiſtration. But St. John oppoſed the coalition, and inſiſted on being appointed ſecretary of ſtate for foreign affairs, with which demand Harley was obliged to comply.

Bolingbroke was ſuſpected, during his embaſſy at Paris, of having betrayed the ſecrets of the cabinet to the French court. Theſe ſuſpicions of his treachery were probably derived from his inattention and love of pleaſure; for Madame Tencin, ſo remarkable for beauty, abilities, gallantry, and ſkill in political intrigue, drew him into a connection with her, at the inſtigation of Torcy, and contrived to ſteal from him ſeveral papers and diſpatches *.

Diſagreement with Oxford.

Two ſuch oppoſite characters as Oxford and Bolingbroke, could not long cordially agree. Bolingbroke poſſeſſed great animation of countenance, elegance of manners, and dignity of deportment. He was faſcinating in converſation, of commanding eloquence, abounding in wit and fancy, maſter of polite learning, which he knew how to draw forth on all occaſions. In his private character he was without morals and without principles, not only not concealing, but rather proud of his profligacy. He was fond of pleaſure, yet never ſuffered his amuſements to interfere with affairs of importance; affecting to reſemble the characters of Alcibiades and Petronius, by mixing pleaſure and buſineſs, in which, when neceſſity required

* Horace Walpole to Lord Townſhend, Nov. 1, 1723. Walpole Papers.

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quired his attendance, he was so indefatigable, that he would drudge like a common clerk. Quick in apprehension, easy of access, no less artful in negotiation than decisive and vigorous in action, clear and perspicuous in his style, but too fond of declamation and metaphor; adopting and enforcing all the violent measures of the Tories; scorning to temporise, caballing with the friends of the Pretender, either with a view to place him on the throne, or to obtain the removal of Oxford by their assistance. Chapter 23. 1725 to 1726.

Oxford was unimpeached in his private character, never offending against morality, either in conversation or action, a tender husband and a good father; highly disinterested and generous. He prided himself on his high descent, was stiff and formal in his deportment, and forbidding in his manner. He was learned and pedantic; embarrassed and inelegant, both in speaking and writing. He was equally an enemy to pleasure and business; extremely dilatory and fond of procrastination; timid in public affairs, yet intrepid when his own person only was concerned; jealous of power, indefatigable in promoting the petty intrigues of the court, but negligent in things of importance; a Whig in his heart, and a Tory from ambition; too ready, for temporary convenience, to adopt measures he disapproved, yet unwilling wholly to sacrifice his real sentiments to interest or party; affecting the most profound secrecy in all political transactions, and mysterious in the most trifling occurrences. He was liberal in making Character of Oxford.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

ing promiſes, yet breaking them without ſcruple, a defect which aroſe more from facility of temper, than from deſign. He correſponded at the ſame time with the dethroned family and the houſe of Hanover, and was therefore neither truſted or reſpected by either party. The only point in which theſe two miniſters agreed, was the love of literature and the patronage of learned men; which rendered their adminiſtration eminently illuſtrious.

Bolingbroke diſguſted.

The diſagreement naturally occaſioned by ſuch diſcordance of tempers and principles, was heightened by a perpetual ſtruggle for power, and the views of diſappointed ambition. Bolingbroke was diſguſted that Harley was advanced to an earldom, while he was only created a viſcount; a cauſe of complaint which he acknowledged, by ſaying that he was dragged into the houſe of lords, in ſuch a manner as to make his promotion a puniſhment and not a reward. He was ſtill farther diſcontented, when he was refuſed the order of the garter, although ſix vacant ribbands were conferred, among whom his rival, Oxford, was not forgotten. But although he was diſaffected, yet he did not venture to give a public oppoſition to the firſt miniſter. Oxford maintained the ſuperiority of power, by the aſcendency of long habit, by the influence of the favourite, lady Maſham, and by the ſtrong prejudice which queen Anne entertained againſt Bolingbroke, for his notorious profligacy.

Obtains the removal of Oxford.

But when Oxford neglected the Jacobites, by whoſe aſſiſtance he had made a peace, and offended lady

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lady Maſham, by depriving her of a ſhare in the profits of the aſſiento contract, Bolingbroke took advantage of theſe indiſcretions; he intrigued with Berwick and the agents of the Pretender, caballed with lady Maſham, who favoured the reſtoration of the Pretender, affected to court the Whigs, obtained the diſmiſſion of Oxford, and would have ſucceeded him in the place of lord high treaſurer, had not the death of queen Anne diſappointed his hopes. Chapter 25. 1725 to 1726.

Being, by the command of George the Firſt, deprived of the ſeals with marks of diſgrace, he ſent a vindication of his conduct to the king, and in a viſit which he paid to Bothmar, attributed his diſmiſſion to the inſinuations of Oxford, and accuſed his rival of having miſrepreſented his conduct*. When the arrangement of the new adminiſtration precluded him from all hopes, and the Tories were perſecuted, he acted with ſpirit and dignity, and warmly defended in the houſe of lords, the peace of Utrecht, when it was attacked by the Whigs. He would not however venture to ſtand the proſecution which awaited him, but after having received, as he himſelf aſſerts, certain and repeated information, "that a reſolution was taken to bring him to the ſcaffold," he fled from England†. Diſmiſſed. Quits England.

Notwithſtanding the laboured apologies and eloquent vindication of his conduct, in his letter to Sir William Wyndham; and his poſitive aſſur-

* Macpherſon's State Papers, vol. 2. p. 650.
† Tindal, vol. 18. p. 356.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

ances that he never formed any engagements with the Pretender, until he had been attainted *; it is now aſcertained beyond the ſmalleſt doubt, that Bolingbroke had entered deeply into the ſchemes which Oxford, in connivance with the queen, had formed to break the Proteſtant ſucceſſion, and to place the Pretender on the throne of Great Britain; that Oxford had caballed with the Jacobites, principally with a view to overturn the Whig miniſtry, and to facilitate the peace; and that the real cauſe of his removal was derived from a refuſal to continue the deſigns in favour of the Pretender, which Bolingbroke offered to purſue. The whole plan and progreſs of this conſpiracy is detailed in ſo clear and unequivocal a manner by Marſhal Berwick, who was principally concerned in the correſpondence, as to demonſtrate the guilt of Bolingbroke, and ſufficiently prove that he was juſtly attainted for treaſonous practices by the ſovereign whom he had attempted to exclude from the throne †.

Joins the Pretender.

Having quitted England, to avoid the puniſhment which awaited him, he threw himſelf into the Pretender's ſervice, and was appointed his ſecretary of ſtate. The Pretender, on his return from his ill-conducted expedition into Scotland, ſuſpecting the treachery or indiſcretion of Bolingbroke, diſmiſſed him from his ſervice with ignominy; many reports were ſpread at Paris of the motives which

* Final Anſwer to the Remarks on the Craftſman's Vindication.
† Memoires de Berwic.

induced

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induced the Pretender to remove a perſon of ſuch diſtinguiſhed talents, to which the earl of Stair ludicrouſly alludes in a private letter to Horace Walpole*. But though charges of treachery † were laid againſt Bolingbroke, by the Pretender's party at Paris, yet as Stair gave no credit to them; and as Marſhal Berwick ‡ alſo entirely exculpated him from any imputation of treachery; we have no reaſon to ſuppoſe that he acted contrary to his profeſſions, or was mean enough to betray a prince whom he was at that time intereſted to reſtore. His diſmiſſion was ſudden and unexpected. He had ſupped with the Pretender, who declared that he had many enemies, but aſſured him of his unalterable kindneſs. Bolingbroke retired at one in the morning; and at nine the duke of Ormond came to demand the ſeals. The real cauſe of his diſmiſſion was derived from ſome abuſive expreſſions, which, in a ſtate of intoxication, he had uttered againſt the Pretender. Ormond, who was preſent, related them in confidence to lord Mar, who, deſirous of ruining Bolingbroke, that he might ſucceed him in his office of ſecretary of ſtate, aſked the duke, in the preſence of the Pretender, what the expreſſions were which Bolingbroke had made uſe of. Ormond declined repeating them,

Chapter 25. 1725 to 1726.

* Correſpondence, Article Bolingbroke, Period III.

† Theſe charges were made in a letter from James Murray, afterwards created earl of Dunbar, by the Pretender, and were anſwered partly by himſelf and partly by his ſecretary, Brinſden ‖, and his juſtification refuted in a reply ſuppoſed to be written by Mar.

‖ Tindal, vol. 18. p. 516.—544.

‡ Memoires de Berwic.

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until the Pretender commanded him; he then obeyed, and the Pretender was ſo exaſperated, that he inſtantly ſent Ormond to announce his diſgrace. This ſtep was taken without the knowledge of the queen mother. Hearing of his diſmiſſion, ſhe ſent to Bolingbroke, requeſting him not to retire; as matters might be ſtill adjuſted between her ſon and him. He returned for anſwer that he was a free man; that he wiſhed his arm might rot off, if he ever drew his ſword, or employed his pen in their ſervice *.

Cabals with Stair.

Bolingbroke, in fact, rejoiced at his diſmiſſion, for it gave him an immediate pretence to quit the party. "The chevalier," he ſays, "cut this gordian knot aſunder at one blow. He broke the links of that chain which former engagements had faſtened on me, and gave me a right to eſteem myſelf free from obligations of keeping meaſures with him. I took therefore, from that moment, the reſolution of making my peace at home, and of employing all the unfortunate experience I had acquired already, to undeceive my friends, and to promote the union and quiet of my country †."

He opened accordingly a negotiation with the earl of Stair, who, he ſays, had been commiſſioned from England to treat with him, but while he refuſed to reveal ſecrets which had been intruſted to him, or betray his friends, he offered his ſervices for the ſupport of the eſtabliſhed government. He

* Earl of Waldegrave's Diary, who received the account from general Buckley, who was at the time in the Pretender's houſehold.

† Letter to Sir William Wyndham.

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ſaid that he never did any thing by halves, that in returning to his duty he propoſed to ſerve his king and country with zeal and affection: that with that view he thought himſelf bound by duty and gratitude, honour, and even ſelf intereſt, to inform the king of every thing which his experience could ſuggeſt, that might be uſeful to ſtrengthen the public tranquillity, and to cruſh the projects of the king's enemies. He offered his ſervices to recal to their duty the Tories who had embraced the Pretender's party, by developing his true character, and by ſhewing how greatly they deceived themſelves in truſting to him for ſecurity for their religion and liberties. "As to myſelf," adds lord Stair, "I am convinced that he ſpoke to me in the ſincerity of his heart. I firmly believe that hs is reſolved to do all that lies in his power to ſuppreſs, and eradicate the Pretender's party; and I am fully ſatisfied, that there is no perſon who can do more hurt to the cauſe than he can. At the end of our converſation, he preſſed my hand; and ſaid, "My lord, if the miniſters do me juſtice to believe that my profeſſions are ſincere; the more they manage my reputation, the greater will be the advantage to the king's affairs. If, on the contrary, they ſuſpect my conduct, they will act right in enacting conditions, which I ſhall alſo act right in rejecting. The difficulties which I make in promiſing too much, will guaranty the performance of my engagements. In all caſes, time and my conduct will prove the uprightneſs of my intentions; and it is far better to wait with patience, than to obtain

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obtain my wiſhes earlier, by quitting the path of honour and probity *.

Obtains promiſe of pardon.

Theſe offers ſeem to have been accepted; promiſes were made to him of reſtoration to his country; a barony was, on the ſecond of July 1716, conferred on his father, Sir Henry St. John, with a reverſion to his other ſons, and it was in conſequence of theſe favours, and the expectation of a future reward, and probably by the advice of lord Stair, that Bolingbroke wrote a confidential letter † to Sir William Wyndham, which was purpoſely thrown into the hands of the miniſtry, and of which an account is given by lord Townſhend to ſecretary Stanhope, who was then at Hanover. This friendly communication, in which he exhorts his friend to quit the cauſe of the Pretender, was followed by his celebrated letter, that was afterwards publiſhed.

Although Bolingbroke, from the hopes of being reſtored to his country, thus traverſed the views of the Pretender; yet the miniſters, who had reaped great advantage from his recantation, did not fulfil their promiſes, and he continued in anxious ſuſpenſe, conſtantly expecting the performance of engagements which was as conſtantly deferred.

Sunderland and Stanhope, in particular, ſeem to have given him expectations, which they either were unable or never intended to realiſe; and a report of his reſtoration, in 1719, gave to Wal-

* Lord Stair's Letter to ſecretary Craggs, at the end of lord Bolingbroke's Letter to Sir William Wyndham.

† Correſpondence. Period III.—Article, Bolingbroke.

pole,

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pole, who was then in oppoſition, an opportunity of mentioning it with public diſapprobation. In his pamphlet on the peerage bill, ſpeaking of Oxford, he ſays, "His rival in guilt and power even now preſumes to expect an act of the legiſlature to indemnify him, and qualify his villainy; and I doubt not but both * expect once more to give laws to the kingdom †." Yet it was under the adminiſtration, and by the efforts of this very miniſter, who had moved his impeachment in the houſe of commons, that Bolingbroke was reſtored to his country. In May 1723, his pardon paſſed the great ſeal, or as it was called, his reſtoration in blood, which enabled him to return to his country, but without giving back his forfeited eſtate, or his ſeat in the houſe of peers ‡. Chapter 25. 1725 to 1726. Obtains his pardon.

Bolingbroke, on receiving his pardon, came to England, wrote letters of thanks to the king, Townſhend, and the ducheſs of Kendal at Hanover, waited on Walpole, to whom he behaved in the moſt ſervile manner, and betrayed the intrigues of Carteret with the Tories. He even propoſed to Walpole, a coalition with Sir William Wyndham, earl Gower, and other leaders of that party, whom he deſcribed as diſſatisfied with Carteret for having amuſed them with falſe hopes, diſguſted with a fruitleſs oppoſition, and anxious to join adminiſtration. Walpole reprimanded his officiouſneſs with becoming dignity, and did not heſitate inſinuating, that he was working againſt his own Viſits England.

* Oxford and Bolingbroke. † p. 14.

‡ Political State for 1723.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

intereſt, in attempting to form a coalition between the Whigs and Tories, when his reſtoration depended ſolely on a Whig parliament; at the ſame time he frankly declared that great difficulties oppoſed it; gave no hopes that he would raſhly bring before the houſe of commons any motion in his favour, and hinted, that any future reward could only be purchaſed by future ſervices *. Bolingbroke received theſe obſervations with the utmoſt deference, acknowledged his obligations to Townſhend and Walpole, and made the ſtrongeſt profeſſions of future attachment. He kept up a correſpondence with the ducheſs of Kendal, and truſted to her influence for removing all obſtructions.

He availed himſelf of this journey to renew his intimacy with his former acquaintances, particularly Sir William Wyndham, and to procure new connections. His inſinuating manners and lively converſation captivated many who had deteſted him while in power and proſperity. Amongſt theſe lord Finch and the earl of Berkley received his overtures with complacency, and zealouſly eſpouſed his cauſe †.

Returns to Paris.

After paſſing a few weeks at Aix-la-Chapelle, with a view to obtain permiſſion to viſit Hanover; he returned to Paris, at the moment when Horace Walpole and Schaub were ſtriving for pre-eminence in the cabinet of Verſailles. Being fully convinced that Carteret would be defeated, and that the influence of Townſhend and Walpole was

* Correſpondence. † Etough.

predominant,

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predominant, he paid the moſt ſervile court to Horace Walpole, and gave him repeated information on ſubjects of great ſecrecy and importance. Chapter 25. 1725 to 1726.

On the death of the duke of Orleans, a proſpect opened to him of rendering his ſituation at Paris extremely intereſting, by becoming a confidential channel of communication between the duke of Bourbon and the Britiſh adminiſtration, and his own efforts were not wanting to carry his ſcheme into execution. He communicated to Walpole and Harcourt the ſituation of affairs at the court of France, drew the character and deſcribed the power of the duke of Bourbon, and the influence of Madame de Prie. He ſtated his own intimacy with the prime miniſter and the miſtreſs, and offered his ſervices to carry on a ſecret correſpondence, and to promote the good underſtanding between the two kingdoms, which had been eſtabliſhed under the adminiſtration of the late duke of Orleans, and which, unleſs the duke of Bourbon could be kept ſteady to the ſame principles, was in danger of being overturned *. Makes overtures to the Walpoles.

Bolingbroke managed the buſineſs with ſuch dexterity, that he affected to decline, while he was moſt anxious to be employed in this mediation; and appeared to be acting in conformity to the ſuggeſtions of the Britiſh cabinet, while he was carrying into execution his own arrangements. Walpole was ſo far impoſed on by his artful repreſentations, that he wrote to his brother Horace,

* Correſpondence.—Article Bolingbroke.

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recommending him to employ Bolingbroke as agent with the duke of Bourbon; and had not the addreſs and ſagacity of the miniſter at Paris declined his interpoſition, and opened a direct communication with the duke of Bourbon, without the privity of Bolingbroke, the principal management of the king's affairs, muſt have been thrown into his hands, and the miniſters in England have been laid under ſuch obligations, that his complete reſtoration would have been an act of juſtice and neceſſity. Foiled in this attempt, he endeavoured to inſinuate himſelf into the negotiation relating to the grant of a dukedom to the Marquis de la Vrilliere. He related to Horace Walpole the embarraſſments under which the duke of Bourbon laboured, exaggerated the indiſcretion of Schaub, and hinted that by proper management, that intrigue might be ſo conducted as to lay a foundation of merit with the French miniſter, and deſtroy the credit of Carteret. In a conference which he had with the duke of Bourbon, the account of which he took care ſhould be communicated to Horace Walpole *, he decried Carteret, praiſed Townſhend, and exalted the abilities and influence of Walpole. This double dealing did not eſcape the notice of Schaub; and in reply to his account, tranſmitted in his private correſpondence, Carteret was induced to obſerve, "What you ſay of Bolingbroke is ſcarcely credible. If it

* Letter from Horace Walpole to Robert Walpole, Paris, December 15, 1723. Walpole Papers.

is

is true, he has not half the capacity I thought he had *." Chapter 25 1725 to 1726.

In the midſt of theſe intrigues, Bolingbroke opened his ſituation and explained his ſentiments to Horace Walpole. He deſcribed his ſuſpence and agitation, recapitulated and repeated promiſes given by Sunderland and Stanhope, mentioned his repeated diſappointments, and obſerved, "that autumnal promiſes had ended in vernal excuſes." He expreſſed his thanks for the act of favour lately extended to him, and added that he had no reaſon to complain of the preſent miniſters, as they had performed as much as they had undertaken. He truſted that the inclinations of the king, as well as thoſe of Townſhend and Walpole, were not unfavourable; and hoped that his reſtoration might be obtained in parliament. He endeavoured to ſeparate his caſe from all conſiderations of party. He artfully declared himſelf at full liberty, as having no tie nor obligation to any perſons, but to thoſe who would come forward in his favour; diſclaimed all connections with the Tories, whom he accuſed of having treated him with ingratitude and barbarity; and declared his firm opinion, that the adminiſtration could not ſtand, nor the government be ſupported, excepting on a Whig foundation, and no engraftment could be made but upon a Whig ſtock. He proteſted that he would prove himſelf a faithful ſubject to the

* Carteret to Schaub, March 12, 1724. Hardwicke Papers.

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king, and be for ever grateful to thoſe who had ſerved him in ſo important an affair; and would act as they ſhould preſcribe to him, either by exerting himſelf in the houſe of lords, or by retiring into the country.

The reply of Horace Walpole was open, manly, and explicit. He expreſſed great ſatisfaction at the declaration, that his brother and friends had never deceived Bolingbroke, and ſaid that what remained to be done depended on parliament. He expoſed the difficulties ariſing from the temper and diſpoſition of parties, hinted at the general averſion of the Whigs to his reſtoration, deſcribed the embarraſſment of the miniſters, and the obſtacles which might ariſe to defeat it if precipitately introduced into the houſe of commons; and he hinted in general terms, that his brother's proneneſs to mercy, his regard for Bolingbroke, and his inclination to oblige lord Harcourt, would incline him to adopt any practicable means of ſerving him.

Bolingbroke obſerving, from this diſcourſe, that inſuperable difficulties obſtructed his complete reſtoration, prudently appeared to give up that deſign, and requeſted that Horace Walpole would intercede with his brother, at leaſt to obtain the reverſal of his attainder, ſo far as to render him capable of enjoying the family eſtate, after the death of his father. He added, that he had not mentioned this requeſt even to his friend lord Harcourt, but entirely ſubmitted it to the good will and

judgment

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judgment of the minister at the head of the treasury *. Chapter 25. 1725 to 1726.

His views at this period were facilitated by his marriage with Madame de Villette, the niece of Madame de Maintenon, a woman of great merit and accomplishments, who was highly esteemed at the French court; and a private transaction, which related to part of her property, gave him an opportunity of sending her to England, and of soliciting his restoration. Madame de Villette employed Drummond, an English banker, to place £. 50,000 in the funds, who purchased, in the name of Sir Matthew Decker, long annuities, bearing interest at 4 per cent. Decker gave a note to Drummond, with an order to pay the sum on demand of Madame de Villette. Eighteen months afterwards, Decker paid £. 1,000 on her draft, and remitted her the annual interest of the remainder till Christmas 1723. About that period, he refused to transfer any more money on her order, alledging, that as she was married, he could not deliver it up without being indemnified; and the situation of lord Bolingbroke, whose estate and property had been declared forfeited, rendered his indemnification of no avail. Thus circumstanced, his lady repaired to England, bearing the name of Villette, and required the payment of her money in her own right. She brought strong recommendations from the duke of Bourbon and count de Morville, and under cover of this transaction, paid assiduous court Marries Madame de la Villette.

* Horace Walpole's Letter to Robert Walpole.—Orford and Walpole Papers.

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to the miniſters, by whom ſhe was well received, and from whom ſhe obtained a promiſe to reverſe that part of the bill of attainder which related to the forfeiture of his eſtate. Bolingbroke expreſſed himſelf highly ſatisfied with this promiſe, although it fell ſhort of the offers which had been made by the preceding adminiſtration, and renewed, in the ſtrongeſt terms, his profeſſions of devotion to Walpole, for this eſſential mark of favour.

Difficulties attending the partial reverſal of his attainder.

The miniſter, however, had many difficulties to encounter, and many obſtructions to remove, before he could venture to ſubmit the queſtion to the houſe of commons. Although Sir William Wyndham had conciliated, in favour of Bolingbroke, a great number of Tories, yet a conſiderable body of them, highly diſſatisfied with his late application to the Whigs, ſtill remained inflexible. But the principal oppoſition was expected from the ſtaunch Whigs, thoſe who had been the ſtrenuous advocates for the ſucceſſion in the Hanover family, and who were the firm ſupporters of government. To obtain their aſſent, or to baffle their attempts, required much ſkill and management, and was the work of time and labour.

The period at length arrived when this promiſe was fulfilled. On the 20th of April 1725, lord Finch offered to the houſe of commons, a petition from Henry St. John, late viſcount Bolingbroke, ſetting forth, "That he was truly concerned for his offence in not having ſurrendered himſelf, whereby he was attainted of high treaſon, and forfeited all his real and perſonal eſtate, and praying, that leave may be given

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given to bring in a bill for reſtoring him to his family inheritance, and enabling him to make purchaſes of any real or perſonal eſtate within the kingdom."

Chapter 25. 1725 to 1726.

Walpole brought the conſent and approbation of the king; and after the reading of the petition, ſeconded the motion, made by lord Finch, for bringing in the bill, by obſerving, "That he was fully ſatisfied the petitioner had ſufficiently atoned for his paſt offences, and therefore deſerved the favour of that houſe ſo far, as to enable him to enjoy his family inheritance, which could not be done without an act of parliament."

Walpole ſupports the bill.

Methuen, comptroller of the houſehold, in an animated ſpeech, which made a deep impreſſion on the houſe, expreſſed his hearty diſapprobation of the motion, and obſerved, "that the public crimes for which this petitioner ſtood attainted, were ſo heinous, ſo flagrant, and of ſo deep a dye, as not to admit of any expiation or atonement; and whatever he might have done to deſerve his majeſty's private grace and pardon, yet he thought him altogether unworthy of any national favour." Then, after enumerating the inſtances of his villainous and ſcandalous conduct, while he had a ſhare in the adminiſtration of affairs in the laſt reign; he concluded, "to ſum up all his crimes in one, his traitorous deſign of defeating the Proteſtant ſucceſſion, the foundation of both our preſent and future happineſs; and of advancing a popiſh Pretender to the throne, which would have involved his native country in endleſs miſery." The arguments

Oppoſition to it.

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ments which ſerjeant Miller advanced were no leſs ſtrong. "He was againſt the motion for three reaſons: 1. Becauſe he thought it againſt the intereſt of the king. 2. Againſt the intereſt of his country. 3. Againſt the intereſt of the preſent miniſtry. He loved the king better than he loved himſelf; and hated his enemies more than he did. He loved his country as he loved himſelf; and as he thought its intereſt inſeparable from the king's, ſo he would not have any public favour ſhewn to one, who had acted in ſo notorious a manner againſt both. As for the preſent miniſters, he was ſo well ſatisfied with their juſt, prudent, and ſucceſsful management, that he would not ſee them expoſed to the cabals and intrigues of their inveterate, though ſeemingly reconciled enemies*." This oppoſition was ſtrenuouſly enforced by Arthur Onſlow, afterwards ſpeaker of the houſe of commons, lord William Paulett, Sir Thomas Pengelly, and ſeveral others, who almoſt uniformly ſupported the meaſures of government. The motion, however, was carried by 231 voices againſt 113; and lord Finch and Walpole were ordered to bring in a bill according to the prayer of the petitioner †.

On the ſecond reading of the bill, lord William Paulett moved for the addition of a clauſe, "diſabling the late viſcount Bolingbroke from being a member of either houſe of parliament, or from enjoying any office or place of truſt." This motion, warmly ſeconded by ſeveral members, was no leſs

May 13.

* Chandler. † Journals.

ſtrenuouſly

ſtrenuouſly oppoſed by the miniſter, and negatived by 154 againſt 84. The bill being agreed to, was ſent up to the houſe of lords, there it paſſed without a diviſion, but not without a violent proteſt ſigned by five * lords; and finally received the royal aſſent. Chapter 23. 1725 to 1726. Paſſed.

Thus was concluded this difficult and diſagreeable buſineſs, from which the miniſter acquired more unpopularity than from any other act in his adminiſtration, for which he incurred great cenſure both from friends and enemies, and by which, inſtead of conciliating the favour, he exaſperated the very perſon for whom he expoſed himſelf to ſo much obloquy.

Soon after the paſſing of this act, Bolingbroke returned to England, wholly diſſatisfied with the reverſal of the forfeiture, which he had ſo repeatedly and earneſtly ſolicited as the termination of his hopes, and for which he proffered his moſt devoted attachment to thoſe who ſhould favour his cauſe. "Here I am," he obſerved in a letter to Swift, "two thirds reſtored, my perſon ſafe, (unleſs I meet hereafter with harder treatment than even that of Sir Walter Raleigh) and my eſtate, with all the other property I have acquired, or may acquire, ſecured to me. But the attainder is kept carefully and prudently in force, leſt ſo corrupt a member ſhould come again into the houſe of lords, and his bad leaven ſhould ſour that ſweet untainted maſs †." July 24. Bolingbroke returns to England.

* Coventry, Briſtol, Clinton, Lechmere, Onſlow. — Journals. Chandler.

† Swift's Works, vol. 19. p. 164.

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About the ſame time, he wrote a letter to the king, claiming the promiſe that had been made of a full reſtitution, laying the blame of the failure on the miniſter, whom he accuſed of meanneſs and treachery*, under the maſk of good will. He diſclaimed all obligation to Walpole, always aſſerted, both in his public writings and private letters, that the king invited him, and drew him into England by frequent, ſolemn, and unſolicited promiſes of his complete reſtoration†.

Complains of Walpole.

Joins oppoſition.

He now declared himſelf a decided enemy to Walpole, effected a reconciliation with the Tories, whom he had ſo recently reviled, joined Pulteney and the diſcontented Whigs; and a year had ſcarcely elapſed ſince the paſſing of the bill, before he began to publiſh in the Craftſman, a political paper, which firſt appeared the 5th of December 1726, a ſeries of eſſays replete with the moſt bitter invectives.

Mutual accuſations.

The adherents of Walpole, in their turn, no leſs bitterly accuſed Bolingbroke of ingratitude; that after being reſtored to the liberty of breathing the air of his native country, and the enjoyment of his fortune (when he was deſervedly an exile from one, and had juſtly forfeited the other) by the indulgence, favour, and aſſiſtance of the miniſter, uſing that indulgence, and requiting that favour, by labouring the deſtruction of his benefactor.

In all queſtions where party is concerned, and

* Lord Bolingbroke to lord Hardwicke, Correſpondence, Period III. Article, Bolingbroke.

† Lord Bolingbroke to Sir William Wyndham. Ibid.

reſentment

reſentment excited, and where abuſe is thrown out with unabating virulence on both ſides, it is difficult to reconcile diſcordant aſſertions, and to extract truth from oppoſite accuſations. It is no leſs difficult to render the conduct of Walpole conſiſtent with that prudence by which he was commonly directed, or to juſtify the motives which induced him to promote an act that enabled Bolingbroke to ſettle in England, and to haraſs his adminiſtration. He had known Bolingbroke from his early youth; he appreciated his talents, was aware of his inſinuating manners and reſtleſs temper, was not ignorant that while he was paying the moſt ſervile court to the Whigs, he had been caballing with the Tories; was convinced that no dependence could be placed on his word, and muſt have been conſcious that nothing leſs than a full reſtoration would ſatisfy a man of his aſpiring ambition.

Motives of Walpole's conduct.

But the apparent inconſiſtency and imprudence of Walpole's conduct, are ſufficiently accounted for from the ſecret hiſtory of this whole tranſaction; from which it appears, that he did not act from his own impulſe, but was gradually led to promote a meaſure, which he did not approve. We have the authority of Sir Robert Walpole himſelf, that the reſtoration of lord Bolingboke was the work of the ducheſs of Kendal, and that in obedience to the expreſs commands of the king, he ſupported the act. Bolingbroke, continually diſappointed in his hopes, had recourſe to a ſurer and more powerful channel of favour. He gained the ducheſs of Kendal

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dal by a preſent of £.11,000*, and obtained a promiſe to uſe her influence over the king for the purpoſe of forwarding his complete reſtoration. Harcourt, with her co-operation, ſeems principally to have managed this delicate buſineſs; and as at this period Townſhend was reconciled to the ducheſs of Kendal, it was probably owing to her intereſt that he was induced to move the king to grant a pardon to Bolingbroke, and even to give him ſtill farther hopes.

In this juncture, Townſhend removed to Hanover, and left to Walpole the management of the buſineſs. Walpole having ſounded his friends, and the advocates of government, found that ſtrong objections were made to the reſtoration of ſo obnoxious a perſon, and being himſelf inclined to the ſame opinion, he, with his uſual frankneſs and candour, repreſented the difficulties, not only to Townſhend, but even to Bolingbroke himſelf, and declined entering into any farther engagements. Bolingbroke, who well underſtood the temper of parties, ſoon perceived that inſuperable obſtacles were oppoſed to his complete reſtoration. He thought fit, therefore, to temporize, and requeſted, as I have already obſerved, the reverſal of part of the bill of attainder, without obtaining his ſeat in the houſe of lords. This requeſt, ſtrongly enforced by the ducheſs of Kendal, was particularly recommended by the king to Walpole, in a moſt authoritative manner. The miniſter could not venture

* Etough's Minutes of a Converſation with Sir Robert Walpole. Correſpondence.

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to disobey the express commands of the king; could not withstand the importunities of the duchess, who had recently assisted in driving Carteret and Cadogan from the helm; was anxious to oblige lord Harcourt, with whom he then lived in habits of the strictest intimacy, and was overcome by the unceasing solicitations of Bolingbroke, and softened by his professions of inviolable devotion. Chapter 25. 1725 to 1726.

Walpole himself performed all he had promised, and had reason in his turn to expect the accomplishment of those professions of gratitude which Bolingbroke had recently made to him. He was not responsible for any agreement made by the preceding administration; he was not answerable for the private assurances of the duchess of Kendal; he was not even bound by the promises, if any such were positively made, of the sovereign himself. Bolingbroke had therefore no reason to accuse Walpole of meanness and treachery, of having broken his word, and of having deceived him under the mask of good-will; for the minister never in any instance promised a full restitution, but always in the most frank and candid manner, gave no farther hopes than obtaining the repeal of that part of the bill of attainder which related to the forfeiture of his estates.

But whatever were the motives which induced Walpole to consent to the return of Bolingbroke, it was undoubtedly the greatest act of imprudence which he ever committed. For till that event, he had only to contend with an heterogeneous opposition, unallied in principle, and divested of mutual confidence;

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confidence; eaſily vanquiſhed, becauſe not capable of uniting under any leader acceptable to all in a well-concerted attack. It remained for Bolingbroke to infuſe ſpirit and harmony into this inert and ill-combined maſs. He ſoon found means to effect this end, by a plauſible philoſophy, recommended by all the graces of eloquence, and enforced by all the arts of perſonal addreſs. He directed and inſpired their labours in parliament; and his ready pen was employed at once to juſtify their conduct, and to vilify their adverſaries.

Remarks on the political writings of Bolingbroke.

His writings were recommended by a glare of metaphorical ornament, at that time very unuſual, the effect of which was to dazzle the judgment of the reader, fix his attention upon the ſurface, and prevent him from penetrating into the ſubſtance of the argument.

It is a juſt remark of his biographer, that Bolingbroke too frequently falls into the ſame error of which he accuſes Clarendon, that of giving characters of perſons which are incompatible with their actions. He warped hiſtory to his own convenience, and was leſs ſolicitous to repreſent paſt events truly, than, under colour of relating them, to draw parallels with thoſe againſt whom he directed his efforts, by ſelecting only ſuch parts as ſuited his particular views *. In drawing the character of Walpole, Bolingbroke is guilty of the groſſeſt miſrepreſentation, and the moſt exaggerated malice. It is recorded of Zeuxis, the celebrated painter,

* Life of Bolingbroke, p. 334.

that

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that for the purpose of giving perfection to the portrait of Venus, he selected the most beautiful parts of the most beautiful women, and from the union of those parts, formed the goddess, without a single defect. In his political delineations, Bolingbroke has pursued the opposite line of conduct. He selected from the ministers of all times and countries, their prominent vices, and from their assemblage, drew the portrait of Walpole without a single virtue. Chapter 25. 1725 to 1726.

From the versatility of Bolingbroke's political life, no fundamental principle of action could be expected; for where is that principle which at some period he had not violated? Where was the party to which he had not rendered himself obnoxious? Nothing then remained for him, but to form a political creed as versatile as his life, and which, Proteus-like, adapted itself to all times, situations, and circumstances.

His doctrines are principally reduced under three heads. A government by prerogative, rather than by influence; coalition of parties; the supposed perfection of the human species in particular instances.

The leading principle of his writings was, that a government by prerogative was better than a government by influence. In enforcing this topic, the author betrays his aversion to the revolution, while he affects to praise it, by an assertion no less remarkable for its audacity than its untruth; namely, that the rights of the subject were more endangered by the system of influence, which had

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Period III. 1720 to 1727. taken place ſince, than by that of arbitrary power which was purſued before that æra. That the crown had acquired more ſources of power by the eſtabliſhment of the funds, and nomination of revenue officers, and enjoyed the means of invading liberty more effectually by the conſtitution of the revenue, than it ever had been invaded by prerogative. He characteriſes prerogative as a mere *chimera*, and influence as *a new and undefinable monſter, far more dangerous to our liberties.* He avers, that national corruption, which he makes the neceſſary conſequence of inveſting the crown with the nomination of the officers employed in managing the revenue, is become univerſal, and that the loſs of liberty is the natural and neceſſary conſequence of national corruption. From theſe premiſes he draws the obvious concluſion, that it becomes highly neceſſary to prevent the ruin of the conſtitution, by reducing the power of the king, by means of an independent houſe of commons; and declares that the only method of effecting this, was to leſſen the means of corruption, to revive frequent parliaments, and to inſure their purity by introducing ſelf-denying ordinances.

This tenet could only be ſupported by the other two doctrines, equally abſurd and extravagant. The ſecond of theſe doctrines was to enforce the *coalition of parties*, by which he underſtood that all the invidious diſtinctions of Whig and Tory *, Diſ-

* The impoſſibility of reconciling the Whigs and the Tories, and the different views of thoſe parties, are fully ſhewn by his own confeſſion, in a letter to Sir William Wyndham, July 23, 1739. Correſpondence, Period VII.

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ſenter and Church-man, which had ſo long troubled and diſtracted the kingdom, ſhould be ſunk into thoſe of court and country; the firſt of which he conſiders as *a faction and confederacy againſt the other*; and the ſecond he characteriſes under the denomination of *conſtitutionaliſts*. Chapter 25. 1725 to 1726.

With a view to effect this purpoſe in a free country, in which party is an eſſential requiſite, he drew out a ſyſtem of policy ſo artfully contrived, that any man, whatever were his political opinions, might, without appearing to deſert his own private notions of government, enliſt himſelf under the banners of any oppoſition, or vote in favour of any queſtion, however repugnant to his real ſentiments, under the notion of oppoſing or driving out a corrupt miniſter, and the ſemblance of laying aſide all prejudice and party attachment.

In attempting to *explode all former diſtinctions, to unite men of all denominations, and to change the narrow ſpirit of party into a diffuſive ſpirit of public benevolence*, he well knew that he contradicted the hiſtory of paſt ages, and the experience of his own. He therefore broached the third doctrine, the ſuppoſed perfection of the human ſpecies, in particular inſtances. Convinced of the abſurdity of advancing, that an oppoſition compoſed of the moſt heterogeneous parts could continue uniformly true to their profeſſed principles, and would not be divided or deſert each other at the inſtigations of ambition or ſelf-intereſt, he turned his hopes of ſucceſs from the many few; to thoſe few *who engroſs the whole reaſon of the ſpecies, who are born to inſtruct, to guide,*

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and to preſerve, and who are deſigned to be tutors and guardians of human kind. Forgetting his own complaint, that *human paſſions are ſo ſtrong, and human reaſon ſo weak*, he deſcribed men as they ought to be, and not as they are; men whom he repreſented *as ſtars ſtill ſtuck in good plenty up and down our hemiſphere, making virtue the foundation of their friendſhip, and merit the title to their favour; delighting rather to be thought good than great; juſt in all their dealings; moderate in their pleaſures; not ſolicitous for a place becauſe they want it, but becauſe the place wants them.*

But ſtill conſcious that he over-rated the number of thoſe choſen few, he concentrated the virtues and wiſdom of the whole ſpecies into one man, A PATRIOT KING, whom he conſidered as born to form the happineſs and glory of England, under whoſe government the *head, and all the members, ſhould be united in one common cauſe, and animated by one common ſpirit.*

In drawing this chimerical character, he laid down poſitions no leſs chimercal. He ſuppoſed that all diſtinctions of party, all cabals for favour, and all jealouſy in individuals poſſeſſing, or contending for power, ſhould be entirely ſuppreſſed by the wiſdom and virtue of one man, whom he calls *a ſort of ſtanding miracle*; and that a whole nation ſhould be ſo perfect in judgment, and juſt in practice, as to acknowledge that they were made happy by ſuch exertions. In this extraordinary attempt to reconcile the ideas of a government by prerogative with thoſe of liberty and happineſs, he endeavours

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endeavours to bribe the imagination instead of convincing the judgment, by an artificial and brilliant display of all those scenes of splendor and domestic felicity which are so lavishly and exquisitely pourtrayed in the Cyropœdia of Xenophon, and Fenelon's Telemachus; scenes which adorn the page of the speculative philosopher, but must be considered as mere puerilities from a practical politician. Chapter 2 1725 to 1726.

In giving these reveries to the public, he employed a specious philosophical jargon, then novel, and calculated to make an impression on ignorant minds; since become more common, and justly exploded, as the cant of hypocrisy or enthusiasm. Its pretensions were founded on candour, liberality of sentiment, universal philanthropy, and a tender concern for the happiness of posterity.

He described himself as labouring *to reinfuse the spirit of liberty, to reform the morals, and to raise the sentiments* of the people. He dwelt with rapture on the ideas of *perfect government, and the completion of social happiness*. He talked of the *moral system of the world, the system of infinite wisdom, the universal law of reason, of moral duty drawn from the constitution of human nature, of the general fitness of things*. He maintained *that the shortest and easiest method of arriving at real knowledge, was to trace back government to the first good principles on which it is founded; principles and measures of conduct founded on true propositions, all of which are obvious, many of them self-evident; principles laid in the system of human nature, drawn from that source from whence all the duties of public and private morality must be derived.* He

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Period III. 1720 to 1727. boaſted *of the noble prerogative of governing a ſociety of freemen by a conſtitution founded on the eternal rules of right reaſon, and directed to promote the happineſs of the whole, and every individual.* After ſome trite obſervations, that *the good of the people is the ultimate and true end of government, and that without liberty no happineſs can be enjoyed by ſociety,* he ſtyles the king the *firſt ſervant of the people, conſiders his right as a truſt, and their's, which he calls an indefeaſible right, as a property.*

From the numberleſs contradictions and political abſurdities to be found in almoſt every page of his works, I ſhall ſelect two inſtances which relate to Walpole. After having deſcribed the *hideous monſter, corruption,* and ſhewn that unleſs it was annihilated it would ſwallow up the conſtitution, and deſtroy *thoſe liberties without which no happineſs could be enjoyed by ſociety*; after diſplaying the neceſſity of *ſhutting up with all the bars and bolts of law, the principal entries through which the torrents of corruption have been let in upon us,* he adds, *I ſay the principal entries, becauſe, however it may appear in mere ſpeculation, I think it would not be found in practice to be poſſible, no nor* ELIGIBLE *neither, to ſhut them up* ALL.

After having, in a long ſeries of invectives, reprobated in every particular, and reproached the corruption of Walpole, aſcribed to that all his power in the cabinet, and in the ſenate, branded him with the names of *high prieſt, firſt miſſionary, and treaſurer of corruption,* he acknowledges that *the aſcendency he had acquired could not be attributed to his*

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his ſuperiority of parts, OR HIS CLUMSY TALENT OF BRIBERY *alone; but that his long continuance in office muſt be aſcribed to the faintneſs and indeciſiveneſs of oppoſition.* Chapter 25. 1725 to 1726.

In fact, the noble writer himſelf lived to ſee the impracticability of his own ſpeculative doctrines. He therefore looked forward to what he called better times, and left his viſionary project as a legacy to poſterity; *I turn myſelf*, he ſays, *from the generation that is going off, to the generation that is coming on the ſtage.* Thus in a few words he confeſſed, that all his writings, and all his labours were repugnant to the conſtitution of human nature, as exhibited by his own experience. Fortunately, the baneful effects of Bolingbroke's influence were counteracted by the known profligacy of his principles, and the unpopularity of his character. For the public prejudice againſt him was ſo great, that Pulteney recommended his departure from England, becauſe his co-operation rendered their cauſe leſs reſpectable *.

His ſpeculative effuſions, notwithſtanding their ſplendour of diction and graces of ſtyle, are not conſulted as containing juſt axioms or practical precepts; except by thoſe who wiſh to avail themſelves of the laxity of his political tenets, and his affectation of recurring to firſt principles and abſtract doctrines, for the purpoſe of ſubſtituting a capricious and theoretical ſyſtem, in the place of a well defined and limited government †.

* Lord Bolingbroke to Sir William Wyndham, July 23, 1739. Correſpondence, Period VII.

† The works of Bolingbroke, principally alluded to, are The Occaſional Writer, his Eſſays in the *Craftſman*, which were afterwards collected and re-publiſhed under the Titles of a *Diſſertation on Parties*, with

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CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SIXTH:

1723—1725.

Diſturbances in Ireland, occaſioned by Wood's Patent.—Public and ſecret Hiſtory of that Tranſaction.—Character of Lord Midleton.—His Diſagreement with the Duke of Grafton—Indiſcreet Proceedings of Government.—Embarraſſments and Conduct of Walpole.—Duke of Grafton recalled, and Lord Carteret appointed Lord Lieutenant.—Reſignation of Lord Midleton.—Surrender of the Patent.—Tranquillity reſtored.—Tumults in Scotland, on levying the Malt Tax.—Prudent Conduct of Walpole.—Character and Services of the Earl of Ilay.

Period III. 1720 to 1727.

THE year 1725 teemed with events of the higheſt importance to the intereſt and ſecurity of England, both in regard to foreign and domeſtic affairs, and gave ſufficient employment to the cabinet. The foreign affairs were diſtinguiſhed by the celebrated treaties of Vienna and Hanover; the domeſtic tranquillity was interrupted by diſturbances in Ireland, ariſing from Wood's patent of coinage, and tumults in Scotland, both of which were ſuppreſſed by the prudence and vigour of Walpole.

No miniſter ever ſuffered more abuſe for the indiſcretion and violence of others, than Sir Robert Walpole. The tumults in Scotland, on account of the duty on malt, and the diſturbances in Ireland, relating to Wood's patent, becauſe they

with a ſarcaſtical dedication to Sir Robert Walpole, and *Oldcaſtle's Remarks on the Hiſtory of England*; *Letters on the Spirit of Patriotiſm, on the Idea of a Patriot King*, &c. His poſthumous Letters on the Study of Hiſtory, have been ably refuted in Horace Walpole's *Anſwer*, and in Leland's *Reflections*.

happened

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happened under his administration, were solely attributed to his misconduct; whereas the duty on malt was carried in the house of commons by the country gentlemen, in opposition to his sentiments; and the grant of Wood's patent, was an unfortunate legacy left by the earl of Sunderland, in which he had no other share than in passing it when he was at the head of the treasury. Chapter 25. 1723 to 1725.

To judge by the accounts generally given of that transaction, it would appear a monster of despotism and fraud, that the halfpence were deficient in weight and goodness, and that the circulation of them would have been followed by the total ruin of Ireland.

In fact, the inimitable humour of Swift, which places the kingdom on one side, and William Wood on the other, has misled our judgment and captivated our imagination; and most persons have formed their opinion from his Drapier's Letters and satirical poems, rather than from authentic documents or well attested facts. The simple narrative of this transaction, stripped of the exaggerated dress in which the malignant wit of the author has invested it, is reduced to a short compass.

There being great deficiency of copper currency in Ireland, the king, in virtue of his prerogative, granted to William Wood, a patent for coining farthings and halfpence, to the value of £. 100,000 sterling, on certain terms which the patentee was bound to follow. William Wood, who in the party language of Swift is ridiculed under the denomination Grant of Wood's patent.

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nomination of a *hardware man* and a *low mechanic*, was a great proprietor and renter of iron works in England. He had a leaſe of all the mines on the crown lands in thirty-nine counties, was proprietor of ſeveral iron and copper works, and carried on, to a very conſiderable amount, manufactures for the different preparations of thoſe metals *. Among many propoſals ſubmitted to government, that which he delivered was accepted, and was conſidered by all perſons of judgment or capacity, not biaſſed by party or national prejudice, as beneficial to Ireland.

Ferment in Ireland.

But the natives did not ſee it in ſo favourable a light, and before the money was circulated, a general ferment was excited. The oſtenſible cauſes of complaint were derived from the conſideration, that the king had treated Ireland as a dependant kingdom †, that the patent was granted to a perſon who was not a native, that the coin was ſtamped in England, and that as a great profit was likely to be derived, the benefit ſhould have principally accrued to the public. All the attempts of the duke of Grafton, then lord lieutenant, to ſubdue the public averſion were ineffectual. The ſpirit of oppoſition ſeized all orders of men, and even many of the king's ſervants, who held the chief places under his adminiſtration.

Inflamed by national zeal, the two houſes paſſed addreſſes to the crown accuſing the patentee of fraud and deceit, aſſerting that the terms of the

* Anderſon's Commerce, vol. III. p. 124.

† See Primate Boulter's Letters.

patent

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patent were infringed both in the quantity and quality of the coin, that the circulation of the half-pence would be highly prejudicial to the revenue, deſtructive of the commerce, and of moſt dangerous conſequence to the rights and properties of the ſubjects: the commons, with an abſurdity and effrontery hardly credible, declared, that even had the terms of the patent been complied with, the nation would have ſuffered a loſs at leaſt of *one hundred and fifty per cent!* and indeed the whole clamour reſted on partial or ignorant repreſentations. It was not at that time expected or dwelt on as a matter of ſpeculative propriety, that the weight of the copper coin ſhould be adequate to its circulating value; the aſſertion that Wood had carried on notorious frauds and deceits in the coinage, as advanced by Swift, and that the intrinſic was not equal to one eighth of the nominal value, was proved to be falſe by an aſſay made at the mint, under Sir Iſaac Newton, and his two aſſociates, men of no leſs honour than capacity, the reſult of which was, that in weight, goodneſs, and fineneſs, it rather exceeded than fell ſhort of the conditions of the patent. Chapter 26. 1723 to 1725.

But the clamour, however unjuſt, was raiſed, and became general; and it was a neceſſary act of prudence, not to increaſe the ferment, by forcing upon a nation what was conſidered as unjuſt and fraudulent. Lord Carteret, who ſucceeded the duke of Grafton in the office of lord lieutenant, failed no leſs than his predeceſſor, in all his endeavours to obtain the introduction of the copper money.

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money. The patent was ſurrendered, and tranquillity reſtored. Wood, as an indemnification for the loſs he had ſuſtained, received penſions to the amount of £. 3,000 a year for eight years*.

Surrender of the Patent.

Such is the public hiſtory of Wood's patent; and it is difficult to conceive by what means or by what intrigues this ſimple tranſaction, calculated for the benefit of Ireland, and in which not a ſingle right was infringed, or a ſingle grievance inflicted, could be ſo miſunderſtood and perverted, as to create a general ferment, and nearly to overthrow the adminiſtration of Townſhend and Walpole. The ſecret hiſtory of this event, which the documents, under my inſpection, enable me to give, will aſſiſt in tracing the motives and cauſes which gave riſe to the diſturbances, and finally occaſioned the ſurrender of the patent.

Secret hiſtory of the tranſaction.

The emoluments ariſing from the diſpoſal of the patent for ſupplying Ireland with copper coin, were given by Sunderland to the ducheſs of Kendal, who ſold it to Wood. Sunderland had warmly recommended it to his friend the duke of Bolton, who was at that time lord lieutenant; but he met with ſo much difficulty in his attempts to countenance and ſupport the project under hand, that he had neither courage or inclination to propoſe a ſcheme which he foreſaw would greatly embarraſs his adminiſtration. On his death, the duke of Grafton was promoted to that high office, at the recommendation of Walpole; he conſented to

* Correſpondence.

bring

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bring it forward, and was promiſed the ſupport of the king's friends in Ireland.

Walpole's reluctance.

Walpole, on ſucceeding Sunderland at the head of the treaſury, inſtantly ſaw and appreciated the difficulties in which this tranſaction would involve him; and with as much frankneſs as his ſituation at that time would permit, remonſtrated againſt the grant, as likely to become unpopular; but being unwilling to offend the ducheſs of Kendal, the extent of whoſe influence over the king he had unfortunately experienced, reluctantly ſubmitted to what he could not prevent, and employed every means in his power to remedy the abuſes and obviate the difficulties. He took the advice of the attorney and ſolicitor general, obtained the ratification of the lord chancellor of England, and, by proper aſſays at the mint, ſecured the execution of the terms ſtipulated by the patent, which at length paſſed the uſual forms, and was ſent to the lord lieutenant for the purpoſe of being put into execution.

Duke of Grafton, lord lieutenant.

When the duke of Grafton returned to Ireland in Auguſt 1723, things were in a ſtate very different from that in which they had been erroneouſly repreſented to him by the Engliſh cabinet. He found a ferment riſing in the nation; a general averſion to the patent; and a moſt decided oppoſition from thoſe who, as he had reaſon to believe, had promiſed their warmeſt ſupport. The character and conduct of the duke of Grafton, were not calculated to conciliate parties, or to reſtore union and harmony in a country like Ireland, diſtracted with

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Period III. 1720 to 1727. with troubles, and abounding with persons disaffected to the English government. He was a nobleman of high honour and disinterested probity; but proud and imperious, fretful and choleric, and highly conscious of his dignified situation. Though by no means deficient in abilities, yet he did not possess sufficient skill and address to guide the helm of state in a difficult period: he was well characterised by his friend, Walpole, as *a fair weather pilot, that did not know how to act, when the first storm arose.*

Opposition and character of lord Midleton. The success of the measure was principally impeded by the unexpected and inflexible opposition of lord chancellor Midleton, who has on that account, incurred the bitter reproaches of Walpole, Townshend, and the duke of Grafton, in their correspondence with each other. Upon a candid review of his conduct, however, it appears that he was actuated by no improper motives, but, in common with many other persons in Ireland, considered the plan imprudently introduced, and inimical to the true interests of the country. The private letters which passed between him, his brother, and son, and which I am enabled to lay before the public, will afford a clear explanation of his motives; and a comparison of them with those of the two ministers, and of the duke of Grafton, relieve the characters of each party from much of that obloquy which flowed from the rage of discordant politics.

Alan Brodrick*, descended from an illustrious

* Lodge's Irish Peerage.—Communications from the honourable William Brodrick.

family,

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family, whose ancestors may be traced from the conquest, was second son of Sir Saint John Brodrick, knight, of Richmond in Yorkshire, and of Wandsworth, who obtained a grant of lands, in the county of Monaghan, during the government of Oliver Cromwell. He performed such essential services in assisting the restoration, that he procured a farther grant of a large estate in the county of Corke, and obtained a charter from Charles the Second, for the town of Midleton to return two members to parliament.

Alan was bred up to the law, and rose to such eminence in that profession, that in 1695, he was appointed solicitor general, and being chosen member for the city of Corke in 1703, he was unanimously elected speaker of the house of commons, attached himself to the Whigs, and having opposed some bills which were favoured by the duke of Ormond, lord lieutenant, he was removed from the place of solicitor general. In 1707, when the Whig administration was formed, he was made attorney general, and in 1709, chief justice of the Queen's Bench; but was remove in 1711, when the Tories came into power. He was chosen, in 1713, member for the county of Corke, and again elected speaker by the Whigs, in opposition to the castle interest.

During the last years of queen Anne, he proved his faithful attachment to the religion and constitution, by promoting the succession of the house of Hanover, and was highly instrumental in counteracting the cabals of those who were inclined to restore

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restore the Pretender. In reward for these eminent services, he was, at the accession of George the First, nominated chancellor of Ireland, in 1715 was created a peer, by the title of baron Brodrick, and in 1717, advanced to the dignity of viscount Midleton. In the same year he was also chosen member of the British Parliament for Midhurst in Sussex, which borough he continued to represent till his death. When the functions of his high office did not render his presence necessary in Ireland, his eloquence and abilities were useful in supporting the measures of government in England.

As he considered himself obliged to Sunderland for his promotion to an Irish peerage, he attached himself to the party of that minister. But neither his obligation or interest could induce him to swerve from his duty to his country, or to support administration in measures which he disapproved. He resisted all the solicitations, offers, and menaces of Sunderland, to vote in favour of the peerage bill, and he persisted in opposition to the request of the lord lieutenant, and the orders of the sovereign. The minutes * of his conversations with Sunderland and others on that occasion, and the rules which he laid down for his conduct, afford evident proofs of his integrity and firmness, and do honour to his memory. His refusal in this instance offended Sunderland, and nothing but the difficulty of finding a proper successor for the office of lord chancellor prevented his disgrace. He was treated how-

* Correspondence. Article Peerage Bill.

ever,

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ever, with so much coldness and disregard, that for three years he expected every moment to be dismissed; a situation of uncertainty, which he bore with unexampled patience and dignity. Chapter 26. 1723 to 1725.

On the death of Sunderland, he attached himself to Carteret, in opposition to Townshend and Walpole. He joined to a natural warmth and vehemence of temper, which he himself was the first to acknowledge, an high consciousness of his own talents and influence, which produced an unbending pertinacity of opinion, and a display, often ostentatious, of his own services and importance. He possessed great dignity of sentiment, and a spirit so independent, that he would not permit even his personal esteem for the king to bias his conduct in the duties of his high station; he considered the salary of office his due for his exertions as chancellor, and thought himself at liberty to act, vote, and speak in parliament (as a lord) just in the same manner while he was on the woolsack, as he would have done on one of the benches*.

The warmth of his temper was increased by the still greater warmth of his brother and son.

His elder brother, Thomas Brodrick, had from his first entrance into life, uniformly promoted the Protestant succession. He was a member of the privy council to king William, and sat in the English parliament for the borough of Stockbridge, and afterwards for Guildford; and in the Irish parliament for the county of Corke. In consideration Character of Thomas Brodrick.

* See Correspondence.

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of his ſervices, he was by the Whig adminiſtration made comptroller of the ſalt duties, and joint comptroller of the army with Sir Philip Meadows; which places he reſigned in 1711, when the Tories came into power. On the acceſſion of George the Firſt, he was again appointed a member of the privy council, but was not gratified with any place. As chairman of the ſecret committee for the examination of the South Sea affairs, he acquired great popularity, and ſtood forth one of the warmeſt advocates for ſevere and rigorous meaſures againſt the directors, and thoſe who had in any degree promoted the South Sea ſcheme. As a Whig, he was ſtrongly attached to the principles of that party; generally ſupported government, but not uniformly; poſſeſſed great weight among the country gentlemen inclined to the Whig intereſt, and not unfrequently propoſed and carried queſtions in oppoſition to the known ſentiments of the miniſter. He was held in high eſtimation by the king, as the head of a family which had ever ſhewn an unabated zeal in favour of his ſucceſſion; had been courted by Sunderland, and after his death, by Carteret and Roxburgh. He was a man of high ſpirit and probity; but his temper was violent, captious, and overbearing.

Character of Saint John Brodrick.

Saint John Brodrick, ſon of lord Midleton, was not deficient in talents and knowledge; poſſeſſed great ſkill in debating, which he managed with good effect in the Iriſh houſe of commons, where his father's advice and intereſt rendered him highly reſpected. He was preſumptuous and confident; ſanguine

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ſanguine in his hopes, and vehement in his purſuits, affecting great foreſight, ſagacity and diſcernment. He was highly irritable, readily provoked, but open to flattery and eaſy of deluſion. He was firſt choſen a member of the Iriſh parliament for the borough of Midleton, and afterwards repreſented, until his death, the city of Corke. He was elected in 1721, and in the new parliament, which aſſembled in 1722, for Beralſton, in Devonſhire. Chapter 26. 1723 to 1725.

Their antipathy to Walpole.

Both the brother and ſon caballed with lord Carteret, and ſeem to have conceived a violent antipathy againſt Walpole, which was heightened by his oppoſition to the bill for permitting the importation of Iriſh calicoes. The proud conſciouſneſs entertained by lord Midleton of his abilities and influence in Ireland, was increaſed by accounts tranſmitted from his brother and ſon, of the king's high ſenſe of the ſervices rendered by the whole family, and by Carteret's repeated declarations, that he alone was capable of governing Ireland. His oppoſition received an additional impulſe from the ſanguine repreſentations of his ſon, that the power of Walpole was declining, and a full conviction that the combination of Cadogan, Carteret, and Roxburgh, would triumph in the cabinet.

Miſunderſtanding between Grafton and Midleton.

An unfortunate miſunderſtanding had taken place between the duke of Grafton and lord Midleton, who, in the capacity of one of the lords juſtices, had directed the adminiſtration of affairs, and conſcious of his influence in the two houſes of parliament, expected to retain the ſame power on the arrival of the new lord lieutenant. The duke of Grafton, however, was by no means inclined to place

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implicit confidence in the chancellor, who had ſhewn ſo many inſtances of an intractable temper, and hoſtility to Walpole. He courted the oppoſite party in the cabinet, and particularly conſulted his competitor for authority, William Conolly, ſpeaker of the houſe of commons, by whom he was almoſt implicitly directed. On his arrival in Ireland in 1723, he was offended at the chancellor, for diſreſpectful behaviour, and bitterly complained to the archbiſhop of Dublin, who being inimical to Wood's patent, did not conceal, or perhaps exaggerated the diſſatisfaction of the lord lieutenant. The conduct of lord Midleton in parliament was ſo offenſive to the duke of Grafton, that he connived at the paſſing of a vote of cenſure in the houſe of lords, for delays of juſtice, occaſioned by his abſence from Ireland. This inſult, ſolely aſcribed by lord Midleton to the duke of Grafton, increaſed the miſunderſtanding; and the duke peremptorily inſiſted on his excluſion from the number of lords juſtices during his abſence.

Dec. 23, 1723.

Theſe jealouſies, fomented by Carteret, laid the foundation of a ſucceſsful oppoſition to the introduction of Wood's coinage, which oppoſition was aided by the concurrence of indiſcreet and unpopular proceedings.

Cauſes of the unpopularity of the patent.

Great diſcredit was thrown upon the meaſure, by a report, induſtriouſly circulated, that the profits of the patent were to be ſhared between Wood and the ducheſs of Kendal. This fact was inſidiouſly communicated by Carteret, to Alan Brodrick, ſecond ſon of lord Midleton, during his viſit

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at Hanover, tranſmitted by him to his friends in Dublin, and ſoon made public by various alluſions of Swift, in his writings and political ballads, in one of which he ſays: Chapter 26. 1723 to 1725.

" *When late a feminine magician,*
" Join'd with a brazen politician,
" Expos'd, to blind a nation's eyes,
" A parchment of prodigious ſize *,"

The indiſcretion of Wood, and of his friends in Ireland, was alſo detrimental to his cauſe. They exaggerated the quantity of coin to be iſſued, and the gains which would accrue to the patentee, and made repeated boaſts of his power and influence in the Engliſh cabinet. Wood himſelf offended the privy council, by obſerving, that if a proclamation was neceſſary, he could have it, or any thing that was wanting to inforce the currency of his coin; and that the complaints and remonſtrances were not intended againſt him, but againſt the king and miniſtry for making the grant. Indiſcretion of Wood,

The miſconduct of government was ſtill greater. The patent was paſſed without formally conſulting either the lord lieutenant or privy council, and its contents were concealed in Ireland: by theſe means exaggerated rumours of its evil tendency were diffuſed, which were univerſally credited, and not found to be falſe until their wide circulation had made a deep impreſſion on the public mind, which it was impoſſible to efface. The lord lieutenant landed on the 13th of Auguſt. and of government.

* A Simile on our Want of Silver, and the only Way to remedy it.

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Assuming the reins of government, he publicly declared, that he was perfectly unconcerned in the event, that the patent was passed before he was made acquainted that it was in agitation, and that he had no instructions about it from the king or the ministry. On the 13th of September, an address was presented from both houses, requesting information concerning the patent. In his answer, returned the 14th, he declared that he had neither the patent, nor any copy, nor even any paper which would give them any satisfaction; but on the 16th, when the house was actually assembled with a view to make a strong remonstrance on the subject, Hopkins, the secretary to the lord lieutenant, informed the speaker, that a person attended without with the exemplification of the patent, which, by mistake, had been delivered to the lord lieutenant's servant, instead of his private secretary, and mislaid.

Even after the irresistible opposition which shewed itself in parliament, no attempts were made to soften or conciliate those members who were against the patent; on the contrary, some were received at the castle with coldness; others were treated with marks of indignity; and Saint John Brodrick was slighted and offended. By these means, the lord lieutenant precluded all confidential intercourse with the chancellor and his friends, who were prevented from explaining the motives of their conduct, and undeceiving him in those points in which he had been misinformed.

Conduct of Walpole.

The conduct of Walpole himself was not at first marked with his usual caution. He suffered the lord

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lord lieutenant to depart without ſpecific inſtructions in what manner he was to act, ſhould the parliament oppoſe the introduction of the coinage. He truſted too much to the repreſentations of thoſe who were friends to government, and who were either ignorant of the real ſituation of affairs, or unwilling to offend, by tranſmitting diſagreeable truths which they well knew would be communicated by others. He did not ſufficiently appreciate the great influence of the chancellor and his family in both houſes of parliament, and when that influence appeared predominant, he attributed the ſtrength of oppoſition ſolely to the combination of the Brodricks with lord Carteret. He bitterly accuſed lord Midleton of treachery and low cunning, of having made, in his ſpeeches, diſtinctions between the king and his miniſters, of caballing with Carteret, Cadogan, and Roxburgh, and of purſuing that line of conduct, becauſe he was of opinion the oppoſite party would gain the aſcendancy in the cabinet. He did not believe the diſturbances to be ſo ſerious as they were repreſented, nor was he ſatisfied with the duke of Grafton's conduct, as being ſolely directed by Conolly, but declared that the part acted by *Conolly, almoſt excuſed what the Brodricks had done**.

Notwithſtanding this confeſſion, he reſolved to ſupport the duke of Grafton in his reſentment againſt the chancellor, and obtained from the king a promiſe, that he ſhould be removed whenever it

* Correſpondence.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

was thought expedient, and the formal notification was made by lord Carteret to the lord lieutenant. But his removal was conſidered at the preſent moment impracticable, by the temper and ſituation of Ireland, and by the influence of lord Midleton's friends in the Britiſh cabinet.

Carteret complained to the king, that his majeſty's name and authority had been uſed to gratify the private pique and reſentment of the lord lieutenant againſt the chancellor; imputed the diſturbances of Ireland principally to that ſource, and induced the king to declare that thoſe ought to be employed who were moſt capable of ſerving him. Thomas Brodrick, in an audience of the king, expoſtulated againſt the propoſed indignity of excluding his brother from the liſt of lords juſtices, proved the weakneſs of the duke of Grafton's government, and the preponderancy of the chancellor's party, which ſufficiently appeared from the vote of congratulation, paſſed by the commons, in favour of lord Midleton, contrary to the avowed influence of the lord lieutenant. This remonſtrance effectually convinced the king of the impropriety of the meaſures which had been hitherto purſued, and irritated him to ſuch a degree, that Walpole became aſhamed and uneaſy at the conduct of the lord lieutenant, which brought him into the greateſt difficulties he had ever experienced. He diſcovered that he had been deceived by the miſrepreſentations ſent from Ireland; he found that lord Midleton had great power and influence, and could not be diſpenſed with in the formation of a cabinet.

Reſolved

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Chapter 26. 1723 to 1725.

Reſolved to withdraw his ſupport from the duke of Grafton, and effect his removal, he had determined to obtain the appointment either for the duke of Bolton, or the duke of Dorſet; and the arrangement was on the point of being made, when the duke of Argyle embarraſſed him, by claiming that high dignity for himſelf. This unexpected demand ſuſpended the execution of his plan, and together with the increaſing ferment in Ireland, rendered it expedient to adopt a new line of conduct. He found that a queſtion of the higheſt conſequence was involved in this diſpute, no leſs than the independence of Ireland; a favourite topic, urged by Molineux, promoted by the archbiſhop of Dublin, and ably ſupported by Swift, in his Drapier's Letters, and other publications. He was too prudent to ſuffer this delicate ſubject to be diſcuſſed in parliament. He held frequent conferences with Saint John Brodrick, who had taken his ſeat in the Engliſh parliament, attentively liſtened to his accounts of the proceedings, confeſſed that he had been groſsly miſled, ſpoke in terms of the higheſt reſpect of the chancellor's character and talents, inſinuated that the duke of Grafton was about to be recalled, and was only continued in his poſt until a proper ſucceſſor could be appointed; diſclaimed any intention of excluding lord Midleton from being one of the lords juſtices, and ſucceeded ſo far as to ſoften, in ſome meaſure, the violent aſperity which had long diſtinguiſhed that family.

At

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Period III. 1720 to 1727. Carteret lord lieutenant.

At this period the ſtruggle * in the cabinet, which terminated in the triumph of Townſhend and Walpole, was finally decided. It was their original intention to remove Carteret intirely, but the embarraſſment ariſing from the claim of the duke of Argyle, and the great difficulty of managing Ireland, rendered it neceſſary to find a perſon who would promote the patent, and be likely to perſuade lord Midleton, and thoſe who acted with him, to ſoften their oppoſition. In this dilemma, lord Carteret was removed from the office of ſecretary of ſtate to the lord lieutenancy of Ireland. Lord Midleton continued in the office of chancellor, was conſtituted one of the lords juſtices, and Saint John Brodrick was nominated a member of the privy council.

Walpole's report.

At the ſame time every effort was made to conciliate the people of Ireland, and to induce them to receive the currency. A report was drawn up by Walpole †, and ſubmitted to the king in council. After fully juſtifying Wood from the charge of not having fulfilled the terms of his contract, and ſhewing that his halfpence exceeded in value and weight the conditions required in the patent, it recommended to the king, that inſtead of £. 100,000, Wood ſhould be permitted to import into Ireland only £. 40,000, to be current to ſuch as voluntarily pleaſed to accept them: the king ſent his order in conformity to this advice.

* See chapter 24.

† The original is in Sir Robert Walpole's hand writing, among the Orford Papers.

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The report, though drawn up with great precision and clearneſs, made no impreſſion. It was anſwered by Swift in the Drapier's Letters; his hardy aſſertions and falſe repreſentations were implicitly believed, and the popular outcry was ſo violent, that the lords juſtices refuſed to iſſue the orders for the circulation of the coin. A general panic ſeized even the king's beſt friends, who were apprehenſive of popular commotions. People of all deſcriptions and parties flocked in crouds to the bankers to demand their money, and drew their notes with an expreſs condition to be paid in gold or ſilver. The publiſhers of the moſt treaſonable pamphlets eſcaped with impunity, provided Wood and his patent were introduced into the work. The grand juries could ſcarcely be induced to find any bill againſt ſuch delinquents; no witneſſes in the proſecution were ſafe in their perſons; and no juries were inclined, or if inclined could venture, to find them guilty *. Not content with refuſing to bring in a bill of indictment againſt the printer of the Drapier's Letters, the grand jury of Dublin, in a preſentment drawn up by Swift, preſented all perſons as enemies to the government, who ſhould endeavour, by fraud or otherwiſe, to impoſe Wood's halfpence on the people.

Increaſing diſturbances.

In this alarming ſtate of affairs, Walpole acted with becoming moderation; he ſaw that it would be

Moderation of Walpole.

* Primate Boulter's Letters.

madneſs

Period III. 1720 to 1727.

madneſs to attempt introducing the copper currency by force; that to repeat the orders to the lords juſtices, who had declared their reſolution not to obey them, would only again expoſe the king's honour, without the ſmalleſt hopes of ſucceſs: that although to permit them to continue after that refuſal, would be to renounce for ever all authority of the crown, yet to remove them on this account, would increaſe their popularity ſo much, that they might be able to counteract the meaſures of government *. He reſolved, therefore, to act a temporiſing part; to ſend over lord Carteret without a moment's delay to bring the people gradually to a proper temper; to ſuſpend or ſurrender the patent as circumſtances required; and, after the reſtoration of tranquillity, to remove the chancellor, and appoint new lords juſtices, of whom, at leaſt the majority ſhould be natives of England.

Motives of Carteret's conduct.

On his arrival in Ireland, Carteret found himſelf in a very delicate and embarraſſed ſituation, and at firſt view his whole conduct in this tranſaction is myſterious and inexplicable. He had ſecretly oppoſed the patent, fomented the diſcontents and jealouſies of lord Midleton and the Brodricks, and excited, underhand, the diſturbances in Ireland. In the frequent conferences which he held with Thomas and Saint John Brodrick, accounts of which were tranſmitted to lord Midleton, he ap-

* Correſpondence.

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peared so hostile to the patent, that Saint John Brodrick says of him, "Lord Carteret is perfectly free from all *suspicion* of being concerned in, or wishing well to this base project*;" and lord Midleton suspected that Wood's patent would be insisted on by Walpole, merely to embarrass lord Carteret, and create difficulties in his administration†. But he had no sooner taken upon him the office of lord lieutenant, than he promoted the introduction of the copper coin with so much zeal, as induced lord Midleton, who was astonished at the change of his sentiments, to observe, that he could not have employed more industry to attain his end, even if the success of his labours would be attended with an entire restitution of the favour and authority which he formerly enjoyed. Chapter 26. 1723 to 1725.

The motives of his conduct are well explained by lord Midleton, in his letters to his brother. His secret sentiments were strongly in favour of the patent, because it was proposed by his friend Sunderland, and he always maintained its validity as derived from the prerogative of the king, which vested in the crown the right of coining money. But with a view to embarrass Walpole and Townhend, he secretly favoured the opposition in Ireland, caballed with the Brodricks, spoke slightingly of the duke of Grafton, and insinuated that the duchess of Kendal had a share in the profits of the patent. He exagge-

* Saint John Brodrick to lord Midleton, May 10, 1724.

† Correspondence, p. 425.

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rated the alarm, and irritated the king by repeated repreſentations, that the diſcontents in Ireland were owing to the umbrage which the duke of Grafton had given to lord Midleton. His hopes of overturning his rivals by theſe means were ſo ſanguine, as induced him to acknowledge to Saint John Brodrick, that the patent was the luckieſt incident that could have occurred in favour of his party in the cabinet. But he was no ſooner convinced that his credit with the king was declining, and that he ſhould be removed from the office of ſecretary of ſtate, than he prevented his total diſgrace by agreeing to accept the lord lieutenancy under the promiſe of promoting the patent, and of prevailing with his friend lord Midleton to deſiſt from his oppoſition. He confided in his own efforts and addreſs to effect the introduction of the money, when lowered to £.40,000; and to ſtop the diſcuſſion on the queſtion concerning the independency of Ireland.

In conformity with theſe promiſes, lord Carteret employed all his addreſs, and uſed the great influence which he poſſeſſed over his friend, to prevail on him to promote, or at leaſt not to oppoſe the introduction of the coin. But all his efforts failed. Neither flattery, promiſes, or threats, had any effect; Midleton uniformly and decidedly perſiſted in his oppoſition; while he expreſſed the higheſt obligation to the lord lieutenant, he declared that his duty to his country was paramount to every other conſideration, and refuſed to give any aſſiſtance to government, until the patent was abſolutely ſurrendered.

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surrendered. This conduct drew upon him the resentment of his former friend: he was received at the castle with coldness and reserve, and considered as an enemy to the king's government; he accordingly resigned the seals with disgust, and Richard West, one of the king's counsel, was appointed lord chancellor in his place.

Resignation of lord Midleton. May 1725.

The inflexibility of lord Midleton annihilated all hopes of success; the king followed the advice suggested by Walpole, and consented to procure the surrender of the patent. In the speech from the throne, the lord lieutenant observed, "I have his "majesty's commands at the opening of this ses- "sion, to acquaint you, that an entire end is put "to the patent, formerly granted to Mr. Wood, "for the coining of copper halfpence and farthings "for this kingdom, by a full and effectual surren- "der thereof to his majesty, an exemplification of "which, under the great seal of Great Britain, shall "be laid before you. So remarkable an instance of "his majesty's royal favour and condescension, "must fill the hearts of a loyal and obedient peo- "ple with the highest sense of duty and gratitude; "and I doubt not, but you will make such suit- "able returns as may convince the world, that you "are truly sensible of the happiness you have en- "joyed under his majesty's most mild and gracious "government, ever since his accession to the throne "of these kingdoms; and that the preservation "of all our religious and civil rights must ever be "owing, under God, to the support of his majesty's "government,

Surrender of the patent announced by the lord lieutenant.

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"government, and the ſucceſſion in his royal houſe *."

The gracious manner in which the ſurrender of the patent was announced, in compliance with the wiſhes of the nation, did not ſatisfy the party in oppoſition. Their great object was to ſhew that the ſurrender was ſolely owing to the king, and to caſt reproaches on the Engliſh adminiſtration, as if they had occaſioned the diſturbances, by promoting the patent, and had been uniformly averſe to its revocation. With this view, when the primate moved an addreſs of thanks to the lord lieutenant for his ſpeech at the opening of the ſeſſion, particularly to expreſs their grateful ſenſe of the *king's goodneſs and condeſcenſion for putting an end to Wood's patent*, the archbiſhop of Dublin propoſed inſerting the words, "*and great wiſdom*," obſerving, in juſtification of this amendment, that the miniſters had been the authors of the patent, but that the king had been *wiſe* enough to ſee the miſchiefs, and accordingly revoked it. He was powerfully ſeconded by lord Midleton, and the motion for the amendment was carried. For the purpoſe of counteracting this ſuggeſtion, the primate laid before the committee, an addreſs ſomewhat differing in form from the reſolution of the houſe, and with the omiſſion of the words *great wiſdom*; but the lords in oppoſition inſiſting, that the committee was bound to receive thoſe expreſſions, the primate was compelled to add them. On the 23d, however, the friends of government obtained their point.

Proceedings in the houſe of lords.

* Hiſtorical Regiſter, 1725.

When

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When the report of the addreſs from the committee was laid before the houſe, a motion was made to leave out the obnoxious words; and after a ſtrenuous oppoſition, in which lord Midleton exerted himſelf with great ability and with much petulance, was carried by 21 againſt 12 *. Chapter 26. 1723 to 1725.

This victory decided, in favour of government, the ſtruggle in the houſe of lords, and the deciſion of the firſt queſtion in the commons, promiſed a ſimilar iſſue. An addreſs was moved, acknowledging the king's great goodneſs and condeſcenſion in obtaining a full and effectual ſurrender of the patent, and expreſſing a grateful ſenſe of all favours, and of the many bleſſings enjoyed under his mild and gracious government. The unanimity with which this addreſs was carried, without a ſingle diſſenting voice, ſeemed to augur a quiet and ſucceſsful ſeſſion; but the friends of lord Midleton, amongſt whom Saint John Brodrick was the moſt able and the moſt violent, excited a warm oppoſition, which required ſome time and much management before it ſubſided. and in the commons.

When a propoſal for a ſupply was laid before the houſe, it was agreed to in general terms; but the grant was delayed under various pretences. A committee being appointed to examine the public accounts, and the amount of the national debt, the ſtatement of government was not allowed. The debt was ſaid to be magnified with a view to obtain a larger ſum than was requiſite, and it was particularly objected, that no credit was given for

* Primate Boulter's Letters, p. 35.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727. caſh in the hands of the collectors, and for ſeveral ſolvent branches of the revenue not yet received; various reſolutions were paſſed, which embarraſſed government, or delayed the payment of the army; a tax on ſalaries, profits of employment, places and penſions, was carried in oppoſition to the caſtle intereſt: But after ſome ſtruggle, the ways and means were voted *, and on the 8th of March the lord lieutenant put an end to this ſtormy ſeſſion. 1726.

The ferment having ſubſided, and public confidence being reſtored by prudent compliances, lord Midleton quitted Ireland, and ſettled in England, until the time of his death †. Carteret was permitted to retain only a nominal power; the principal authority was veſted in Dr. Hugh Boulter, who had been raiſed from the biſhoprick of Briſtol, to the primacy of Ireland, and a reſolution was adopted of filling the high charges of ſtate with the natives of England, which the primate conſidered as an eſſential requiſite for the maintenance of public tranquillity, and for the eaſe of thoſe who governed in Ireland ‡.

* Proceedings of the parliament in Ireland, Hiſtorical Regiſter for 1725.

† Before his return to England, Fawkener, the printer, requeſted permiſſion to dedicate the Drapier's Letters to him, as the preſerver of Iriſh liberty, and the father of his country, but he declined it in terms of high indignation.

It redounds, indeed, much to his honour, that although lord Midleton refuſed to ſupport the patent, yet he condemned, in the ſtrongeſt terms, the violent conduct of Swift, and of his patron the archbiſhop of Dublin, whom he repreſents as the two perſons from whoſe politics and wrangling, Ireland had received more damage than it could have been in the power of its worſt enemies to have brought upon it.—Lord Midleton to Thomas Brodrick, November 17, 1724. Correſpondence. —Lord Midleton died in 1727.

‡ Primate Boulter's Letters, p. 19. The contents of this chapter are principally drawn from the letters in the Orford, Townſhend, Walpole, and Midleton Papers. Correſpondence, Period III.

During

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During the progreſs of the diſturbances in Ireland, Scotland became the ſcene of ſimilar agitations.

Duty on malt evaded in Scotland.

Since the Union, the natives of Scotland had objected to the payment of many taxes impoſed by the Britiſh parliament on the united kingdoms, and had ſhewn themſelves particularly averſe to the duty on malt, which they long evaded under various pretences.

Propoſal to enforce it.

The Engliſh country gentlemen were highly diſſatisfied with this exemption of the Scotch from a burden which was conſidered as heavy and grievous. Accordingly, when, in a committee of ways and means, the continuance of the malt tax was propoſed, Thomas Brodrick moved to adjourn the committee, for the purpoſe of conſidering of a method for obliging Scotland to pay a proportionate part of the duty on malt. Walpole, foreſeeing the evil effects which might reſult from uſing compulſory means, oppoſed the motion *; but finding the ſenſe of the houſe againſt him, prudently ſuffered the adjournment to paſs without a diviſion. On the next meeting, however, of the committee, he contrived to evade any alteration in the bill, which was continued as uſual for one year. But the clamours of the country gentlemen were ſo violent, that in the next ſeſſion it was propoſed, inſtead of the duties on malt in Scotland, to lay a duty of ſixpence on every barrel of beer or ale;

1724. February 7.

Oppoſed by Walpole.

10th.

* Saint John Brodrick to lord Midleton, February 8, 1723. Correſpondence.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

and the queſtion was carried by a majority of 133 votes againſt 41 *.

December, carried.

This act had ſcarcely paſſed before the people of Scotland were influenced by miſtatements of its tendency, and by a partial repreſentation of the relative ſituations of Scotland and England. A legal argument was drawn up with much ſkill, put into familiar language, circulated with great activity, and had an alarming effect upon the public mind. It was thus ſtated: The Scots act of Charles the Second, paſſed in 1681. It declares that the right of ſucceſſion to the crown ſhall devolve according to proximity of blood; that no difference in religion can alter or divert it; and that it is high treaſon, by writing, ſpeaking, or otherwiſe to endeavour any alteration or diverſion, or to debar the ſucceſſor from the immediate, actual, and free adminiſtration of the government. The only bar to the validity of this act, is the treaty of Union, which was contracted by two independent kingdoms, and was to remain in force as long, and no longer, than each fulfilled its articles. It is univerſally acknowledged by the public law of nations, and confirmed by the reaſon of the law which prevails in private contracts, that the violation of any material articles of a compact is a legal diſſolution of the whole. The reſolutions of the houſe of commons, which transferred the duty on malt, to a duty on beer, being contrary to the 6th and 7th articles of the Union, will diſſolve that Union; the diſſolution of the Union, by bringing

Means employed to inflame the Scots.

* Political State for December 1724, p. 593.

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the Scots act into force, instantly dethrones George the First, and renders the next in succession of the Stuart line king of Scotland. The people are released from their oath to the dissolved government, and under no obligation to obey the laws of the revenue; and the commissions of the judges who are entrusted with the execution of those laws, are become void. It was also observed, that the annals of history afford many instances where infractions of compacts, though considered at the time of little consequence, have proved no less destructive to the party which made the encroachments, than to those who were oppressed. Israel having once revolted, upon a trifling occasion, from Judah, the seat of government, powerful in wealth and arms, could never be reduced to obedience, and became a separate kingdom. Sweden joined to Denmark by the union of Calmar, was released from its dependence by the breach of that union on the part of Denmark; and a defender was found in Gustavus Vasa, who restored liberty to his native country. The United Provinces, oppressed by taxes, and shackled in the free exercise of religion, shook off the yoke of Spain, under the powerful government of Philip the Second; the Scots gave sufficient proofs of their resistance to repeated oppressions under the reigns of Charles the Second, and James the Seventh, and they are now called upon to resist the tyranny of the minister, who keeps the king and country in chains, and is attempting to rivet a tax on this country, which is an infringement

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ment of the Union, and hoſtile to their liberty and independence *.

Tumults at Glaſgow.

Theſe repreſentations had a ſtrong effect, and a general ferment took place, in a country which teemed with Jacobites, and where, according to the expreſſions of the earl of Ilay, *by a long ſeries of no-adminiſtration, the mere letter of the law had little or no effect with the people.* The public diſcontents broke out at Glaſgow on the 21ſt of June, when the commiſſioners of the exciſe were preparing to do their duty, and the people threatened to ſtone them if they attempted to viſit the malt-houſes. Application being made to general Wade, commander in chief of the forces in that part of Scotland, he ſent two companies of ſoldiers, under the command of captain Buſhel, for the purpoſe of ſupporting the commiſſioners, and quelling any riot.

The populace aſſembled in conſiderable numbers, repeatedly exclaiming, "Down with Wal-"pole, and up with Seaforth;—the Mackenſies are "up in the north, and will ſoon come to our aſ-"ſiſtance †." They broke open and plundered the houſe of Daniel Campbell, member for the city; aſſaulted and drove away the troops, who were finally compelled in their own defence to fire; and after killing and wounding three or four, retreated in good order to Dumbarton.

* Grant's Letter to Sir Robert Walpole. Orford Papers.

† General Wade's Letter to the duke of Newcaſtle, July 1, 1726. Walpole Papers.

General

General Wade, informed of these events, marched with a large body of troops to Glasgow, and accompanied by Duncan Forbes, the lord advocate of Scotland, took quiet possession of the city; apprehended some of the rioters, arrested the magistrates, and conveyed them prisoners to Edinburgh, for being accessary, or at least for having connived at the tumults, and taken no pains to discover the rioters. They were tried by the lords justiciaries; acquitted, and immediately discharged. Captain Bushel, who had been arraigned for murder, according to the forms of law, was convicted and condemned; but as the orders by which he commanded his troops to fire, had been dictated by self-defence, he was pardoned, and promoted in the service. The rioters at Glasgow were brought to trial; yet such was the lenity of government, that four only, after being scourged, were sentenced to transportation, and one woman was condemned to stand thrice in the pillory. Chapter 26. 1723 to 1725.

Although this tumult at Glasgow, and the riots which took place in a few other towns were suppressed, yet they gave rise to an affair at Edinburgh, which threatened the most serious consequences. The magistrates of Glasgow had been accompanied to Edinburgh by a large body of the inhabitants, who reproached the people for betraying the interests of their country; and upbraided them, that by submitting to the law, they would become the instruments of wreathing about their necks the insupportable bonds of the malt Confederacy of brewers at Edinburgh.

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tax *. The acquittal of the magiſtrates being conſidered as a victory over government, the popular diſcontents increaſed to an alarming degree. The brewers entered into a combination not to give ſecurity for the diſcharge of the new duty, and not to brew if they were judicially called upon for payment. All the maltſters in Scotland depended on this combination of the Edinburgh brewers, who were conſidered as the champions of Scottiſh liberty †.

The cauſe of the brewers was highly popular among all ranks and diſtinctions of men, not only of thoſe who were not employed by Government, but even of thoſe who were inveſted with authority. Some of the lords juſticiaries were timid, or lukewarm, others ſecretly averſe to the impoſition of the tax; while the juſtices of the peace, and the magiſtrates of the principal towns, openly expreſſed their diſapprobation.

But the greateſt obſtruction aroſe from the conduct of the duke of Roxburgh, ſecretary of ſtate for Scotland. Strongly attached to Carteret and Cadogan, he had joined them in attempting to remove Townſhend and Walpole; and aware that his diſmiſſion had been recommended to the king on the removal of Carteret, ſtill continued to augment the diviſion in the cabinet. He now ſecretly encouraged the diſcontents in Scotland, and counteracted or delayed the orders of government, which, in virtue of his office, were

* Letter from John Campbell to Sir Robert Walpole. Correſpondence.

† Letter from the earl of Ilay to Mr. Stewart. Correſpondence.

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iſſued by him. A general opinion alſo prevailed, that a firm reſolution to reſiſt the new impoſts with unabating zeal, would be attended with a ſucceſs ſimilar to the event of the oppoſition which had been recently made in Ireland to Wood's coinage, where the unanimous voice of the country was on the eve of obtaining from government the ſurrender of the patent.

The brewers were ſtill farther encouraged by rumours induſtriouſly circulated by perſons of credit and conſequence, that theſe ſevere meaſures were adopted by the regency, contrary to the inclinations of the king, only for the purpoſe of ſupporting Walpole; that in the next ſeſſion of parliament he would be diſgraced; that the chief power would be lodged in the hands of Pulteney, in conjunction with the duke of Roxburgh; and that thoſe who now ſubmitted would be expoſed to the reſentment of the new adminiſtration, and the fury of the populace.

Miſſion of the earl of Ilay.

In this dilemma, the miniſter, with the approbation of the regency, deputed Archibald, earl of Ilay, lord keeper of the privy ſeal in Scotland, to Edinburgh, armed with full powers from government, and privately inſtructed by Walpole, who tempered the violent orders ſent from Hanover. The removal of the duke of Roxburgh from the office of ſecretary of ſtate, which was adopted at the earneſt requeſt of Walpole, ſoon convinced the deluded people, that they had been impoſed upon by the enemies of government, in ſuppoſing the miniſter diſagreeable to the king, and that his opponents would

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would be triumphant. General Wade, in purſuance of the act of parliament paſſed in the preceding year, diſarmed the highlanders of the moſt diſaffected clans, and the inhabitants of the Iſles of Mull and Sky. The ſpirit and zeal of lord Ilay, broke the combination at Edinburgh, and reſtored tranquillity; to him Walpole wholly attributed the final ſuppreſſion of the riots; and the warm praiſes of his conduct, which he tranſmitted to the king, do honour to the exertions of the one, and to the gratitude of the other.

From this period lord Ilay became the perſon in whom Walpole implicitly confided for the management of the Scottiſh affairs, which he conducted with great ability and prudence, and with ſo much real authority, that he was called the king of Scotland. The riſe, progreſs, and termination of theſe tumults, are minutely related in the correſpondence which paſſed between Sir Robert Walpole, lord Townſhend, and the earl of Ilay *.

Character of the earl of Ilay.

Archibald, earl of Ilay, and afterwards duke of Argyle, on the death of his brother John, was ſecond ſon of Archibald earl of Argyle. He was born at Ham Houſe, at Peterſham, in 1682, educated at Eton, and reſided in England until he was about ſeventeen years of age, when he was ſent to the univerſity of Glaſgow. Being a younger brother, with a ſmall fortune, he went to Utrecht,

* Article, Tumults of Scotland.

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and made a conſiderable proficiency in the civil law, with a deſign to practiſe in that line. But his father being created a duke, he renounced this intention, and embraced the profeſſion of arms. He was, when very young, appointed colonel of the 36th regiment of foot, and governor of Dumbarton caſtle. But finding himſelf more qualified for a ſtateſman than a ſoldier, he quitted the army, and with his uſual aſſiduity, employed himſelf in the acquiſition of political knowledge. In 1705, he was appointed lord regiſter of Scotland, and in the enſuing year, was nominated one of the commiſſioners for ſettling the Union: in conſideration of his ſervices, he was created earl of Ilay, and on the concluſion of the treaty, was choſen one of the ſixteen peers of Scotland, and conſtantly elected in every future parliament, till his death, excepting that which aſſembled in 1713. His excluſion at that time, was owing to the zeal with which he had abetted the cauſe of the Whigs, and promoted the ſucceſſion of the Proteſtant line. In 1710, he was made juſtice general of Scotland. Chapter 26. 1723 to 1725.

Although he had long renounced the profeſſion of arms, yet when the rebellion broke out in 1715, he placed himſelf at the head of a corps of royaliſts; prevented, by his prudent conduct, general Gordon, at the head of 1,000 men, from penetrating into the Weſtern Highlands; and raiſing levies, joined the duke of Argyle at Stirling, and was wounded at the battle of Dumblain. His military conduct was only a temporary exertion. His principal

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Period III. 1720 to 1727. principal merit consisted in his parliamentary abilities, which were very considerable. In his study of the law, he had acquired acuteness of apprehension and method of arrangement. His speeches were replete with solid arguments and keen observations; his language was plain and fluent, and his manner grave and solemn. He continued invariably attached to Sir Robert Walpole, during his long administration, and counteracted, as much as lay in his power, the violence of his brother's politics, when he joined opposition. In 1725 he had been nominated keeper of the privy seal, and in 1734, he was made keeper of the great seal, which office he held till his death *.

Walpole, having thus, by timely concession on one hand, and by a due mixture of vigour and moderation on the other, suppressed these alarming disturbances in Ireland and Scotland, expressed, in a letter to lord Townshend, his exultation, his sense of the difficulties from which he had been relieved, and his resolution to avoid similar embarrassments. "I think we have once more got Scotland and Ireland quiet, *if we take care to keep them so.*"

* For many of these particulars, I am indebted to the obliging communications of lord Frederick Campbell.

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CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SEVENTH:

1725.

Diſſolution of the Congreſs of Cambray.—Origin and Progreſs of the Union between the Emperor and Spain.—Treaty of Vienna.—Affairs of the North.—Alarms and Conduct of England.—Application to Parliament.

The Emperor and Spain diſſatisfied with the quadruple alliance.

I HAVE already obſerved, that the quadruple alliance, which was concluded with a view to terminate the diſputes between the Emperor and the king of Spain, equally diſpleaſed both parties. Accordingly, the Emperor and Philip obſtructed the ſucceſs of the negotiations at the congreſs of Cambray, where attempts were forming, under the mediation of England and France, to ſettle the final terms of reconciliation between thoſe two powers.

Pretenſions of the Emperor.

Beſides many other objects in diſpute, the Emperor was unwilling to renounce the eſtabliſhment of the Eaſt India company at Oſtend, and was ſtill more reluctant to beſtow, according to his promiſe, the inveſtiture of Parma and Tuſcany on Don Carlos, from a juſt apprehenſion, that the ſettlement of a Spaniſh branch of the houſe of Bourbon in Italy, would endanger the ſecurity of his dominions in that country.

Of Spain.

Philip no leſs eagerly inſiſted on the reſtitution of Gibraltar, which he declared had been promiſed to him, as the price of his acceſſion to the

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the quadruple alliance, and retarded his evacuation of Sicily and Sardinia, until the inveſtitures of Parma and Tuſcany ſhould be beſtowed on Don Carlos. The conſequence of this mutual repugnance to the terms of the quadruple alliance, was a private overture, made by Philip to the Emperor, and the miſſion of Ripperda to Vienna, for the purpoſe of adjuſting the conditions of their reconciliation. While this ſecret negotiation was pending, the reſentment of Philip and his queen was inflamed by an event which touched their affections and intereſts in the tendereſt point, and juſtified, in ſome meaſure, the violent proceedings which they inſtantly adopted.

Views of the duke of Orleans.

One principal motive which had induced Philip to accede to the quadruple alliance, was the double marriage between his family and the houſe of Orleans. Don Carlos was affianced to Mademoiſelle Beaujolois, the fourth daughter of the duke of Orleans, and the infanta Maria Thereſa, daughter of Philip, by Elizabeth Farneſe, was betrothed to the king of France. This arrangement was highly advantageous to both the contracting parties; for as the infanta was only four years of age, her marriage with Louis the Fifteenth, left the chance of an eventual ſucceſſion to the crown of France ſtill open, to which Philip and his queen, notwithſtanding repeated renunciations, looked with anxious expectation; and ſhould the young king live to conſummate the marriage, the infanta of Spain would become queen of France, and their deſcendants ſit on the throne. The regent was

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no leſs gratified by the contemplation of his own advantage reſulting from the ſame circumſtances; he conſidered the precarious health of the young king, and the infancy of the bride, as placing at a very remote diſtance the proſpect of a lineal heir; and oppoſing no obſtruction to the hopes he entertained of reigning in his own right, for the ſecurity of which, he depended on the promiſed aſſiſtance of England. Chapter 27. 1725.

During the life of the duke of Orleans, the infanta was treated at Paris as the future queen; but after his death, the duke of Bourbon, in compliance with the general ſenſe of the nation, and in conformity to his own intereſt, ſent back the infanta to Spain, and affianced Louis the Fifteenth to the daughter of Staniſlaus, titular king of Poland. This meaſure, however juſt or neceſſary in itſelf, was conducted with ſuch want of addreſs and circumſpection, that it produced an immediate rupture between France and Spain. The abbot de Livry, who was commiſſioned to open this delicate buſineſs, was ordered to deliver to the king of Spain, letters from Louis the Fifteenth and the duke of Bourbon, explaining, in reſpectful terms, the reaſons which induced them to ſend back the infanta. Livry, inſtead of fulfilling his orders, was no ſooner admitted to an audience, than he threw himſelf on his knees, kiſſed the king's hands in an agony of deſpair, burſt into tears, and thus betrayed his errand before he offered to deliver the letters. The king and queen refuſed to receive them, turned from him Return of the infanta.

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him with indignation, and dismissed him from their presence with the greatest marks of ignominy. On receiving a notification from their minister at Paris, that the infanta was to be returned, Livry and the French consul were ordered to quit Madrid in twenty-nine hours, and Philip publicly declared, that Spain could never shed sufficient blood to avenge the insult offered to his family.

Resentment of the king and queen of Spain.

On the day which succeeded the issuing of these orders, Philip, in an audience which he gave to the British embassador *, enumerated, in an agony of resentment, all the aggravating circumstances which had accompanied this insupportable indignity offered to his daughter; he made the most bitter complaints at the manner in which it had been carried into execution; and accused the duke of Bourbon of having added duplicity to insult. He had, they both alledged, repeatedly approved the marriage with the infanta, had assured their minister at Paris, that the espousals should be celebrated on the 30th of March; he had made this declaration even after the abbot de Livry was commissioned to notify the resolution of dissolving the marriage; and then, without waiting for their answer, had published the resolution in France. The deceit and fraud of this whole proceeding, they observed, were so flagrant as must render them contemptible in the eyes of all Europe, and of their own subjects, did they not feel the highest resentment at such enormous ingra-

* William Stanhope to the duke of Newcastle, 19th March, 1725. Harrington Papers.

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titude. After theſe expreſſions, Philip declared his determination of ſeparating himſelf from France for ever; he truſted this reſolution would not occaſion any decreaſe in the friendſhip of the king of England, but rather draw cloſer the bands of union and amity. He was determined to place his entire friendſhip and confidence in him alone; and declared that he ſhould order his plenipotentiaries at Cambray to reject the mediation of France, and to ſubmit the final ſettlement of the points in diſpute, between him and the Emperor, to the ſole mediation of England *. Chapter 27. 1725.

This offer was no ſooner declined by George the First, as injurious to his alliance with France, than Philip transferred his reſentment to England, broke up the congreſs of Cambray, and ſent immediate orders to baron Ripperda, to conclude the terms of a final reconciliation with the Emperor. England rejects the ſole mediation.

Ripperda found an eaſy compliance in the Emperor, who had long been diſſatisfied with George, both as king of England and elector of Hanover; as king, for his ſtrict alliance with France, and his refuſal to co-operate in excluding Don Carlos from the ſucceſſion of Parma and Tuſcany; and as elector, for the acquiſition of Bremen and Verden, and for refuſing to pay the enormous fine demanded for the inveſtiture.

The diſputes between Spain and the Emperor, which had ſo long embarraſſed and agitated Europe, Treaty of Vienna.

* William Stanhope to the duke of Newcaſtle, Madrid, March 20, 1725. Walpole and Harrington Papers.

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rope, and which had been rather heightened than compoſed by the congreſs of Cambray, were terminated in a few conferences: the two ſovereigns, in whoſe quarrels ſuch a deluge of blood had been ſhed, and ſuch immenſe treaſures expended, ſuddenly contracted an alliance for the mutual ſupport of each other's intereſts, without the knowledge of thoſe very powers who had ſo long and ineffectually attempted to negotiate an accommodation between them.

This alliance between the Emperor and Spain, concluded at Vienna, conſiſted of three ſeparate treaties. By the firſt, ſigned on the 30th of April, the two ſovereigns confirmed the articles of the quadruple alliance. Charles the Sixth renounced his pretenſions to the crown of Spain; Philip acknowledged the Emperor's right to Naples and Sicily, the Milaneſe, and the Netherlands, and guarantied the pragmatic ſanction, or the ſucceſſion to the hereditary dominions of the houſe of Auſtria, in the female line.

Alarms of England.

In conſequence of this ſudden union, the new allies were ſuſpected of forming the moſt ambitious and dangerous projects. It was not credited that Philip the Fifth would ſo eaſily have renounced that juſt claim, which he could form on the Netherlands, Naples, and Milan, ſhould the Emperor die without iſſue male, and have guarantied the whole Auſtrian ſucceſſion, in the female line, unleſs the Emperor, in return, had promiſed ſome ſecret articles in favour of the children of Philip, by Elizabeth Farneſe, who wholly

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wholly governed the counſels of Spain. Influenced by theſe conſiderations, England and France were no leſs alarmed at the treaty of Vienna, than offended at the inſult offered to them as mediating powers, in concluding that alliance without their interpoſition. Theſe ſuſpicions were ſoon afterwards ſtrengthened by the indiſcreet and violent expreſſions of Ripperda; by intelligence from the Britiſh miniſters at Madrid and Paris, and from St. Saphorin, the Britiſh agent at Vienna; they were confirmed by the immediate demand of the reſtitution of Gibraltar, made by Spain, as the ſole and indiſpenſable condition of the continuation of peace and commerce with England. Chapter 27. 1725.

Farther treaties.

It ſoon appeared that a ſecond and third treaty had been ſigned on the firſt of May. The ſecond was a treaty of commerce; and ſupported the eſtabliſhment of the Oſtend company, which the maritime powers conſidered as contrary to the treaty of Weſtphalia, and as involving in its conſequences the diminution of their Indian trade. The third was a treaty of mutual defence; the two ſovereigns guarantied their reſpective territories, and engaged to ſupport each other with all their force, ſhould either be attacked; the king of Spain to ſupply fifteen men of war, 15,000 infantry, and 5,000 horſe, or ſtipulated ſubſidies inſtead; the Emperor to bring into the field 30,000 foot and 10,000 horſe.

Secret articles.

But beſides theſe conditions, reports of other articles were circulated and believed; that the Emperor promiſed to give in marriage his daugh-

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ters, the two arch ducheſſes, to Don Carlos and Don Philip, the two infants of Spain, and aſſiſt in obtaining by force the reſtitution of Gibraltar, if good offices would not avail. In addition, it was ſtrongly rumoured, and many circumſtances induced the miniſters to believe, that arrangements were making to place the Pretender upon the throne.

Audience of the Imperial miniſter.

George the Firſt received the notification of the treaty of Vienna, from Count Staremberg, the Imperial embaſſador, with an appearance of the moſt perfect indifference. In an audience, to which Staremberg was introduced by lord Townſhend, he began by obſerving, that on the propoſal of Ripperda, at Vienna, to commence a ſeparate treaty, the Emperor had replied, the congreſs of Cambray being eſtabliſhed for the purpoſe of ſettling the diſputes between him and the king of Spain, under the mediation of Great Britain and France, he did not ſee the neceſſity of altering the train of the negotiation. But when Ripperda inſiſted (on the part of Spain) that an attempt ſhould be made to compoſe their differences, the Emperor, reflecting on the difficulties derived from the miſunderſtanding between Spain and France, and conſidering that Spain had rejected the mediation of France, and the king of England had declined the ſole mediation, conceived, that for the promotion of the public tranquillity, it was his duty to endeavour to form an amicable compromiſe with the king of Spain. This attempt had been crowned with ſucceſs, the

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treaty was at length ſigned; he was commanded to communicate a copy of it to the king, and Fonſeca, the Imperial miniſter at Paris, was alſo commiſſioned to lay another before the king of France. He obſerved, that the treaty was in all reſpects conformable to the quadruple alliance, and only regulated thoſe points which remained to be adjuſted. He remarked, that as the Emperor had bound himſelf, by the quadruple alliance, to guarantie the ſucceſſion to the crowns of England, France, and Spain, Philip had, in conformity to the dictates of reaſon and juſtice, conſented to guarantie the pragmatic ſanction. His Imperial majeſty, he ſaid, truſted and hoped that the kings of Great Britain and France would alſo guarantie that order of ſucceſſion, by acceding to the treaty; with this view, an article was inſerted for the admiſſion of thoſe powers, who, with the conſent of the contracting parties, ſhould accede within a year; and the article was thus worded, becauſe it was not thought proper to name France, on account of the miſunderſtanding with Spain. He particularly ſpecified, that although the treaty with Spain was ſigned, yet the Emperor had ordered his plenipotentiaries not to quit Cambray until the Spaniſh miniſters had taken their departure. Ripperda, he added, had informed the Emperor, that ſome points * ſtill remained to be ſettled between Spain and England; and the king his maſter re-

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* Alluding to Gibraltar.

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queſted the Emperor to employ his mediation to that effect. To this requeſt the Emperor had replied, that if thoſe matters related to, and were the conſequence of the quadruple alliance, and if the king of England approved it, he would willingly offer his interpoſition, but otherwiſe, he would not interfere.

Reply of the king.

The king, after receiving the copy, congratulated the Emperor and king of Spain on their reconciliation. He then ſaid, that Spain finding it impoſſible to overcome the impartiality of the mediators, and to induce them to act in contradiction to the quadruple alliance, had deputed Ripperda with a view to form a direct accommodation with the court of Vienna; that his miſſion taking place before the quarrel aroſe between France and Spain, it was not to that event, but to the equity and firmneſs of England and France, that the overtures from Spain were to be attributed; that the hopes of ſupporting the public tranquillity, and maintaining the faith of treaties, had induced the mediating powers to exert themſelves in attempting to bring the congreſs of Cambray to a happy concluſion, by ſettling the objects in diſpute between the Emperor and Spain, which were in themſelves ſo little intereſting to the two crowns. He did not take the leaſt notice of the delicacy which the Emperor affected to ſhew in not being the firſt to recal his miniſters at Cambray, nor of the demand for acceding to the treaty; and concluded by obſerving, that in regard to the offer made by the Emperor, of interpoſing

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interposing his assistance towards adjusting any differences between England and Spain, he did not recollect that any other subsisted, except such as related to commerce, and in those there was no occasion for a mediation *. Chapter 27. 1725.

To the Spanish embassador, when he notified the treaty, the king expressed his satisfaction at the peace, because he was thereby delivered from a difficult and burdensome mediation; and he added, with a smile, "I hope the reconciliation will prove as sincere and durable as the parties expect †." Audience of the Spanish minister.

At the moment when the union of the Emperor and Spain threatened the south of Europe with new disturbances, the tranquillity of the north was in danger of being broken by the daring enterprizes of Russia, who seemed to employ, with great effect, the new ascendancy which she had gained as an European power. When Peter the Great had been counteracted in his attempts against Denmark, by the vigorous interposition of England, he turned his views to Sweden, at that time distracted with the troubles naturally derived from a disputed succession, declining under the weak administration of a sovereign almost reduced to a cypher by the new constitution, and enfeebled by factions, natural to a government founded on popular principles, and fomented by a turbulent aristocracy. But he was prevented from taking an Affairs of the north.

* Lord Townshend to St. Saphorin, May 3-14, 1725. Walpole Papers.

† Walpole Papers.

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active ſhare in the diſturbances of Sweden by the Perſian war, which carried him from the Baltic to the Caſpian ſea. At the concluſion of the campaign, he again turned his thoughts to Denmark and Sweden. By gaining the ſenate, he concluded, in oppoſition to the king, a defenſive alliance with Sweden for twelve years. The aim of this alliance was levelled againſt Denmark; and a ſecret article ſtipulated, that the contracting powers ſhould employ their good offices to obtain the reſtitution of Sleſwic to the duke of Holſtein, and if theſe did not ſucceed, ſhould have recourſe to other meaſures. He alſo refuſed to liſten to the overtures of reconciliation with George the Firſt offered through the mediation of France and Sweden, unleſs the king would bind himſelf to inſiſt on the reſtitution of Sleſwic. The treaty was ſcarcely ſigned, when Peter died; but his wife Catherine, who was raiſed to the throne by the intrigues and influence of prince Menchikof, adopted all the views of her deceaſed huſband, promoted the cauſe of her ſon-in-law with ſtill greater warmth, and made vigorous exertions for the purpoſe of forcing Denmark to accede to her demands. Thus a new war ſeemed inevitable, and preparations were made on all ſides againſt an approaching rupture.

Every attempt of France and England to reconcile theſe jarring intereſts, failed of ſucceſs, Catherine inſiſted on the reſtitution of Sleſwic, or an equivalent (which alluded to Bremen and Verden) as the indiſpenſable condition of her accommodation with Denmark. In vain the ſenate exhorted

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exhorted her to try the way of negotiation, and earneſtly beſought her, "for the eaſe and relief of her ſubjects, to countermand the chargeable equipments ſhe had been pleaſed to order in favour of the duke's pretenſions on Sleſwic." In anſwer to theſe exhortations, the Empreſs warmly replied, "Let not any one of you all, that would be reckoned an honeſt ſubject, or hope to enjoy the leaſt ſhare of my favour, dare to offer me ſuch mean ſpirited advice. The duke of Holſtein, ſtripped unjuſtly of his hereditary dominions, took ſanctuary in our country, and threw himſelf into the arms of my deceaſed lord for protection; he is ſince contracted to my daughter, and is himſelf as dear to me as my own child. I am bound by all the rules of honour, as well as the ties of blood, to ſee juſtice done to that unfortunate prince, in whoſe cauſe I would not ſcruple to forego the weakneſs of my ſex, and even to draw a ſword, or to put myſelf at the head of an army: I could content myſelf with cloaths to keep me warm, and with bread to eat; but I will have you know that my children ought to be, and ſhall be treated as the offspring of my dear lord, and your ſovereign deceaſed. Whoever of you will aid me in this juſt cauſe of my ſon-in-law, ſhall be encouraged and rewarded; but whoever dares oppoſe it, ſhall feel the utmoſt weight of my diſpleaſure. If the kings of France and Great Britain are really diſpoſed to help the duke of Holſtein in recovering his right, this equipment will facilitate their operations, by intimidating the king of Denmark, and putting him to a conſtant expence.

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expence. I know that prince will not be able to reſt in his bed, nor to keep a ſingle ſhip in his harbours unequipped, as long as he ſees that the fleet and gallies of Ruſſia, with 50,000 men on board, can in a fortnight's time viſit him in the very port of Copenhagen. But let France and Britain refuſe their aſſiſtance to the duke, while I have Sweden and Pruſſia on my ſide, I hope he is in no danger of wanting ſubſiſtence. In ſhort, it is for my intereſt and glory, as well as your's, to convince the world, that I have power to ſee juſtice done to my family, and am reſolved to make uſe of it: and I know no ſuch way of convincing them of this truth, as by letting them ſee the effects of it with their own eyes."

At the concluſion of theſe words, ſhe gave orders in their preſence, to Menchikof and Apraxin, to have the fleet and troops in readineſs by the middle of May at their peril *.

Alarming reports.

In conſequence of theſe reſolutions, Spain and the Emperor made overtures to Catherine, which were cordially received. Large ſums of money were remitted from Madrid to Peterſburgh, and plans of offenſive operation were concerted between them. It was reported that the fleet and troops of Ruſſia were preparing to act, not only againſt Denmark, but to join Spain and the Emperor in favour of the Pretender. But none of theſe tranſactions had any effect in diſturbing

* Stephen Poyntz to lord Townſhend, Stockholm, May 14, 1725. Walpole Papers.

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the public tranquillity, or exciting the attention of parliament. Chapter 27. 1725.

As the embarraſſed ſituation of foreign affairs, and the proſpect of an approaching rupture with the Emperor, Spain, and Ruſſia, might render it highly neceſſary to expend large ſums in ſecret ſervice money; as there was no ſum appropriated to ſuch emergencies, and as the revenues of the civil liſt, loaded as they were with a large debt, were incapable of affording a competent ſupply, the miniſter was again laid under the neceſſity of applying to parliament. Application to parliament.

On the 8th of April, a meſſage from the king was delivered to the houſe, importing that he had been engaged in ſome extraordinary expences, which he was perſuaded his loyal commons would believe to have been employed, not only for the honour and dignity of the crown, but for the intereſt and proſperity of his people. The report of the treaſury ſtated the debt at £.508,363. In the debate, it was aſſerted that ſince the civil liſt was ſettled, an expence of above £.90,000 a year had been incurred, which could not be foreſeen, and conſequently not provided for. Parliamentary relief having been given in a ſimilar caſe three years before, juſt and abundant matter was ſuggeſted for parliamentary debates and popular complaints. Pulteney was particularly urgent, and commenced on this occaſion his public oppoſition. A compliance with the meſſage however was carried by a large majority *.

* For its being taken into conſideration by a committee of the whole houſe on the 9th, 239 againſt 119; and for paſſing the bill on the 16th, by 211 againſt 99. Journals.

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CHAPTER THE TWENTY-EIGHTH:

1725.

Conclusion and Object of the Treaty of Hanover.—Objections of Walpole, —Removed.—Observations on the secret Articles in the Treaty of Vienna.

Period III. 1720 to 1727.

Negotiations at Hanover,

SUCH was the situation of affairs in the north and south, when the king arrived at Hanover, on the 25th of June. The whole political horizon was thickly covered with clouds, which seemed to announce a future tempest. To disperse these clouds, and to bring back serenity, seemed almost beyond the power of human prudence.

Hanover, as the Hague in time of William, now became the great centre of intrigue and negotiation, and the cabinet of a British sovereign in the heart of Germany, pacified or convulsed Europe. The great object of Townshend's negotiations, was to add vigour to the co-operation of France, to gain Prussia, to detach Sweden from Russia, and to form with France, and by her concurrence in the north, a counter treaty to that of Vienna, which might awe the Emperor and Spain, and prevent the princes and circles of the German empire, from acceding to an alliance, which solely regarded the house of Austria, and was wholly unconnected with the interests of Germany. All these points were effected with consummate address. Horace Walpole obtained at Paris the concurrence of France, however

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however averſe to adopt vigorous meaſures. Townſhend, in a conference at Herenhauſen, lured Frederick William, by an offer of guarantying his ſucceſſion to Berg and Juliers, and detached him from Ruſſia and Auſtria. Poyntz, aided by French and Engliſh money, ſupported the cauſe of the king of Sweden, depreſſed the Ruſſian party, and acquired a majority in the ſenate favourable to the Engliſh intereſt. Chapter 28. 1725.

In the midſt of theſe auſpicious circumſtances, a defenſive alliance between England, France, and Pruſſia, was ſigned on the 3d of September at Hanover, from which it is uſually denominated the treaty of Hanover. By the third article, the contracting parties mutually ſtipulated to furniſh, in caſe of an attack, two months after requiſition, England and France reſpectively 8,000 foot and 4,000 horſe, and Pruſſia 3,000 foot and 2,000 horſe, or the value in ſhips or money. If theſe quotas were not ſufficient, they were to agree concerning farther ſuccours; and, in caſe of neceſſity, to aſſiſt the party attacked with all their forces. Treaty of Hanover.

The treaty of Hanover, like moſt defenſive alliances, had two meanings. The oſtenſible purport was to guaranty each other's dominions, and the treaties of Weſtphalia and Oliva. The real purport was to form a ſtrong alliance in oppoſition to the deſigns of the Emperor, Spain, and Ruſſia, and, under the general tenor of guarantying the privileges of commerce in particular, which the contracting parties actually enjoyed or ought to enjoy, as well in as out of Europe, to compel the Emperor Its objects.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

Emperor to relinquiſh his favourite project of eſtabliſhing the Oſtend company, which was conſidered by England and Holland as contrary to the articles of the treaty of Weſtphalia; and to counteract the attempts which the Emperor, Spain, and Ruſſia were accuſed of carrying on in favour of the Pretender.

Approved by the cabinet.

A copy of the treaty being immediately tranſmitted by lord Townſhend to the duke of Newcaſtle, was firſt communicated confidentially to Sir Robert Walpole; and by his advice laid before a ſelect meeting of thoſe * members of the regency who were moſt entruſted with the ſecrets of the cabinet. The reſult † of the conference was, an unanimous approbation of the contents, and a reſolution to ſupport the engagements contracted by this alliance. The lords juſtices in like manner gave their conſent; and immediate negotiations were ſet on foot to obtain the acceſſion of the United Provinces, Sweden, and Denmark, and ſeveral of the German princes and ſtates, which was afterwards effected.

Townſhend's projects:

The reſentment entertained at Hanover againſt the Emperor, is ſufficiently proved by a viſionary ſcheme, which the ſanguine diſpoſition of Townſhend had conceived for the conqueſt and partition of the Auſtrian Netherlands, and which he fully

* The lord chancellor King, the earl of Berkley, firſt lord of the admiralty, and earl Godolphin, who was mentioned by the duke of Newcaſtle as the only perſon, in the abſence of the duke of Devonſhire, to whom it was thought proper to entruſt a matter of ſo great ſecrecy and importance.

† Duke of Newcaſtle to lord Townſhend, September $\frac{10}{21}$, 1725. Correſpondence.

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enters into and justifies, in a confidential letter * to Horace Walpole. He was moreover so fully assured of its success, that at one time he proposed to divide the conquered provinces between England, France, and Holland; and at another, to transfer them to the elector of Bavaria †. It is most probable that this wild scheme, the impracticability of which was proved by Horace Walpole in his reply ‡, was never communicated to Walpole; but if communicated, we may be convinced that it met with no encouragement from a minister, whose great principle it was to avoid, as much as possible, all foreign entanglements, and not to enter into any war which was not connected with the security of England. Chapter 28. 1725.

Townshend announced, with great triumph, the success which attended his complicated negotiations, by the conclusion of the treaty of Hanover. In a dispatch to Horace Walpole, dated September 3, 1725, he observes, "I must now congratulate with you on our having so successfully begun a work, which, if cultivated and improved as it may be, will check the ambitious views of the court of Vienna, and secure the tranquillity of Europe; and in order to obtain that great end, no time ought to be lost to engage other powers to accede to this treaty." And exultation.

* Lord Townshend to Horace Walpole, Hanover, August 27, 1725. Walpole Papers.

† Lord Townshend to W. Finch, $\frac{1}{12}$ November 1725. Walpole Papers.

‡ September 4, 1725. Walpole Papers.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

Imputation of Hanoverian influence:

It has been uſually aſſerted, and echoed from one publication to another, that during the reigns of the two firſt ſovereigns of the houſe of Brunſwic, the helm of government was uniformly ſteered by the Hanoverian rudder, and the intereſts of Great Britain *wholly* ſacrificed to the intereſts of the king's dominions in Germany. But no tranſaction has been more vehemently arraigned as a dereliction of national honour, than this treaty, upon which lord Cheſterfield has ſaid*, "that Hanover rode triumphant on the ſhoulders of England;" and lord Chatham, in his energetic language, obſerved, "it is a treaty, the tendency of which is diſcovered in the name; a treaty by which we diſunited ourſelves from Auſtria, deſtroyed that building which we now may perhaps endeavour without ſucceſs to raiſe again, and weakened the only power which it was our intereſt to ſtrengthen." It may, perhaps, ſeem preſumptuous to affirm, in oppoſition to theſe reſpectable opinions, that there was no event ſince the acceſſion of the houſe of Brunſwic, in which the intereſts of Hanover were more ſacrificed to thoſe of England, than in this very treaty, which then raiſed ſuch an outcry againſt the Walpole adminiſtration, and which ſtill affords a theme for political obloquy.

In the firſt place it may be obſerved, that if in this treaty the intereſts of England were wholly ſacrificed to thoſe of Hanover, evident proofs of

* Further Vindication of the caſe of the Hanover Treaty.

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that fact would be traced from the conduct of the king and his German miniſters. We ſhould find them uniformly promoting that alliance, uniformly concurring in vigorous meaſures againſt the houſe of Auſtria; but the contrary is the fact. The king himſelf oppoſed the Hanover treaty, and objected to all vigorous proceedings againſt the Emperor, from a dread of being put under the ban of the empire*, and from a tender concern for his electorate, which was threatened with an immediate invaſion. Nor was he induced to ſanction the meaſures of the Britiſh cabinet, until he was perſuaded that, even ſhould a rupture with the Emperor enſue, his German dominions would not be expoſed to an attack, becauſe it would only be a naval war, and hoſtilities would be principally confined to the Weſt Indies†; and that in all events, ſupported by the united arms of France and England, he would have no cauſe of apprehenſion‡.

Chapter 18. 1725. Refuted.

The treaty was highly diſpleaſing to the German miniſters, who, alarmed at the repeated menaces of the Imperial court, loudly exclaimed, that the king was expoſing his Hanoverian dominions to the vengeance of the head of the empire, for the ſake only of a few branches of the Engliſh trade. They accordingly renewed their efforts againſt Townſhend and Walpole, leagued with oppoſition, and

* Intercepted Letters. Correſpondence, Period III.

† Palm to the Emperor, December 17th, 1726.

‡ Townſhend's Diſpatches to Horace Walpole, November 1725, and Auguſt 1726.

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Period III. caballed with thoſe foreign powers who were in-
1720 to 1727. imical to the Engliſh cabinet.

We now find the Emperor, with whom the Hanoverians are ſaid to have been conſtantly at variance during the whole reign of George the Firſt, courting that very party; we ſee his confidential miniſters expreſſing hopes of their aſſiſtance to *counteract* the *hoſtile* intentions of the *Engliſh* cabinet; lamenting, in moſt pathetic terms, the overthrow of that influence, which is held forth as unfavourable to the Imperial intereſt, and caballing with Bothmar, and Fabricius the king's chamberlain; we trace the empreſs of Germany correſponding with the ducheſs of Kendal, for the purpoſe of infuſing pacific ſentiments into the king.

Another motive, which had certainly no connection with Hanoverian politics, and was ſolely derived from a due conſideration of England alone, is thus detailed in the report of the treaty of Vienna: "The Emperor has long been deſirous to have a naval force, and though his endeavours in Italy have hitherto proved fruitleſs, becauſe nothing can produce navigation but trade, yet ſhould the Oſtend company go on with ſucceſs, by the natural courſe of things, the Emperor will in time have a naval force on the coaſt of Flanders, which may prove much more inconvenient to us hereafter, than a fleet in the Mediterranean or Adriatic ſeas; and there are many reaſons why we ſhould be extremely jealous of the increaſe of ſhipping in the hands of a popiſh prince. The command of the ſeas has frequently paſt from one nation to another;

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ther; and though Great Britain has continued longer in poſſeſſion of the ſuperiority than perhaps any other nation ever did, yet all human affairs are ſubject to great viciſſitudes. We have ſeen one conſiderable maritime power eſtabliſhed in the north in our memory; Spain likewiſe was in a fair way to make a figure at ſea not long ago, and perhaps may do ſo ſtill; but the proteſtant intereſt at ſea is declining. The Dane and the Swede are no longer conſiderable in the Baltic, and there is reaſon to apprehend, that the Dutch naval force is not at preſent upon a very good foot *."

Chapter 28. 1725.

Thus then, I have endeavoured to ſhew that this treaty was not directed by the intereſts of Hanover, but diametrically oppoſed them; that it was wholly an Engliſh treaty in every thing, but the name; and that the motive which gave riſe to it, was the protection and preſervation of Britiſh commerce, Britiſh poſſeſſions, and Britiſh government. Its determinate objects were, the preſervation of Gibraltar, the abolition of the Oſtend company, and, if credit may be given to the ſuppoſed ſecret articles in the treaty of Vienna, the fruſtration of the plan for reſtoring the Pretender.

Treaty of Hanover, a Britiſh treaty.

In thus attempting to explain the motives which led to the formation of the treaty of Hanover, I am not juſtifying Sir Robert Walpole, for he never entirely approved that alliance; he always thought that the king and Townſhend were too much alarmed with exaggerated rumours and ap-

Walpole's objections.

* Report concerning the Treaty of Vienna. Orford Papers.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727. prehenſions of diſtant evils; he was of opinion, that milder meaſures might have been purſued with greater probability of ſucceſs. He ſtrongly objected to one part of their proceedings; that while they were anxious to gain allies on the ſide of Germany, they neglected to ſecure Portugal, the advantages of whoſe friendſhip, in caſe of a rupture with Spain, were incalculably great; and he did not heſitate to deliver his opinion, however contrary to the ſentiments of the king, and his brother-in-law, with that frankneſs to which he was always accuſtomed. He remonſtrated, in the ſtrongeſt manner, againſt the large ſums of money required for gaining Sweden; and when lord Townſhend, in the name of the king, demanded £. 100,000 for that purpoſe, he ventured to declare that it was ſo large a demand, as could not be legally ſupplied by any other method than from the civil liſt; that £. 50,000 was as much as that could furniſh, without the greateſt difficulties, and truſted that no more would be drawn for. He thought Townſhend too precipitate in concluding the treaty; hinted his doubts whether the empreſs of Ruſſia had any ſerious intention to invade England, and ſtrongly oppoſed the ſearching or laying an embargo on the Ruſſian ſhips, which Townſhend ſuſpected were employed in conveying arms and ammunition to the diſaffected in Scotland or Ireland.

He was alſo diſſatisfied with lord Townſhend for having concealed the negotiation which terminated in the treaty of Hanover, until it was entirely concluded. He doubted the ſincerity of France, and

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and ſuſpected (what really happened) that ſhe would evade paying her ſhare of the ſubſidies, and that therefore the principal burthen of the expence would fall on England. He was averſe to enter upon meaſures which might tend to diminiſh the force of the houſe of Auſtria, whom he had always conſidered as the natural ally of England, and the bulwark againſt the ambitious deſigns of France, whenever an union with Spain ſhould be re-eſtabliſhed, and the French finances be recovered from the exhauſted ſtate to which they had been reduced by the war of the Spaniſh ſucceſſion, and the fatal effects of the Miſſiſſippi ſcheme. Chapter 28. 1725.

He declared, in the moſt poſitive terms, that if a war was to be undertaken, which he moſt heartily deprecated, it was abſolutely neceſſary to convince the nation, that an invaſion by a foreign power, or an evident deſign of an invaſion, the ſupport of the Pretender, and the cauſe of the Proteſtant ſucceſſion, were the principal motives that compelled the king to part with that peace and tranquillity which had been attended with ſuch laſting and happy effects. But from the moment that there appeared to him any danger of an invaſion in favour of the Pretender, however remote and diſtant, he caught the alarm. He became not leſs anxious than his brother miniſter to adopt meaſures of defence, and to prepare for hoſtilities; yet he continued ſo true to his ſyſtem, that, during the complicated negotiations which followed the treaty of Hanover, he inveighed againſt precipitate meaſures, and invariably recommended caution and forbearance. He Motives for ſupporting it.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

was, in fact, so very anxious to prevent a rupture with the Emperor, that he availed himself of the pacific sentiments of the duchess of Kendal*, to counteract, by her influence over the king, the more violent and hostile resolutions of Townshend, who supported the necessity of vigorous measures.

Secret articles of the treaty of Vienna discussed.

It was observed by the late earl of Hardwicke†, that the merits of the treaty of Hanover entirely rest on the still undetermined points, whether the courts of Vienna and Madrid intended only to compose their own quarrels, or also to take Gibraltar, and to impose the Pretender on England. As these yet undecided points still exercise the sagacity, and give full scope to the conjectures of native and foreign historians, I shall here observe, that the papers and documents submitted to my inspection, fully display the facts which prove the reality of the secret articles, and which produced the public declarations of the king and ministers in parliament, that the Emperor and king of Spain proposed to attempt the recovery of Gibraltar, and the restoration of the Pretender. From a candid review and comparison of these accounts, we may draw this inference, that the king of Spain, urged by resentment, ambition, and interest, was serious in his resolution to extort the cession of Gibraltar and Minorca, at all events; was prepared to employ his whole force against England to restore the Pretender; and

* Correspondence.

† Hardwicke Papers.

that

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that he fully depended on the co-operation of the Emperor, to whom he ſent, in fourteen months, 1,340,000 piſtoles; and would have remitted more, had the galleons arrived. To theſe facts, may be added the frequent conferences of Ormond and Liria, ſon of the duke of Berwick, with the Spaniſh, Imperial, and Ruſſian miniſters; the plan of an invaſion by Liria; the aſſembling of troops on the coaſt of Gallicia; the engagement of officers for the Pretender's ſervice; the redemption of the ſtands of arms which the Pretender had pawned at Cadiz; the diſtinguiſhed reception of the duke of Wharton, as agent of the Pretender, with the enſigns of the garter, by him recently conferred; and his miſſion to Vienna for the purpoſe of concerting a plan of operation. At this criſis, the Britiſh embaſſador was treated with ſlight and indignity; he was, to uſe his own expreſſion, avoided by the grandees like a peſtilence. The Jacobite air, "The king ſhall enjoy his own again," was inſultingly played at court, and the duke of Liria did not ſcruple to declare, that he hoped it would ſoon be a crime in Spain to mention George the Firſt as king of England *.

But a diſtinction has been made between the king of Spain and the Emperor, on whoſe behalf it has been aſſerted, that ſome reports were afterwards found to have been exaggerated, and ſome imputed projects never intended to be carried into

* Mr. Stanhope's diſpatches from Spain, 1725. Harrington and Walpole Papers. See Correſpondence, Article Ripperda.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

execution. The Emperor himſelf poſitively denied that he had ever entertained ſerious deſigns of aſſiſting the Pretender, and declared that he had only lured the queen of Spain with the hopes of giving his daughters in marriage to her two ſons, which he never meant to realize. Yet at the time there were ſtrong reaſons to believe that he encouraged the Pretender and his agents.

The Emperor's great object was to eſtabliſh the Oſtend company, and to obtain the guaranty of the pragmatic ſanction, which England and France declined, and with that view, to force George the Firſt to a compliance, by affecting to co-operate with Spain in favour of the Pretender, and by threatening an invaſion of the electorate of Hanover. Yet there were ſufficient appearances to juſtify the apprehenſions of the king, and to induce him to believe that the Emperor was ſincere in his deſigns of joining Spain with all his forces, and that he would only be deterred by a counter-alliance. Ripperda ſaid publicly, that by this cloſe union of Spain and Auſtria, the two ſovereigns would avenge the inſults they had received; and the partiſans of the Emperor boaſted, that as he was no longer alarmed for Italy, there was no power in the empire who could venture to oppoſe the dictates of their maſter in matters of religion or otherwiſe *. The Auſtrian miniſter publicly boaſted, that the Emperor would give laws to Europe; that he would now poſſeſs the ſole and

* St. Saphorin to lord Townſhend, Vienna, 11th May 1725.

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entire direction of the court of Spain, and that in future the king must be obliged to him for the continuance of the harmony between England and Spain, and for the security of the commercial advantages stipulated with that crown *. Count Sinzendorf also said to Petkum, "Let the king take care of himself, for we know that the people of England are beginning to be tired of him." The Emperor was weak enough to make an unconstitutional distinction between the king and parliament, and boasted to count Oropossa, that by offering to the parliament the exclusive commerce to Spain and the Indies, he should not only obtain the restitution of Gibraltar, but seduce England from France. "My ministers," he added, "are unanimous; I am desirous to favour the people and commerce of England; but Gibraltar and Minorca must first be restored †." As the Emperor was at this time known to govern the councils of the court of Madrid, and the strictest union appeared to be maintained between them, it was not possible for ministers to distinguish between his professions and intentions; nor does a subsequent avowal of duplicity on his part, inculpate those who, acting under the impulse of opinions so well founded, formed that treaty which deterred the king of Spain and his allies from exerting themselves in the execution of those projects, which, if once accompanied with success, might have been pursued to an extent not originally

Chapter 28. 1725.

* Duke of Newcastle to Mr. Stanhope, May 4th, 1725, O. S.

† St. Saphorin to lord Townshend, Vienna, May 30th, 1725.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

nally intended by the Emperor. Such were the grounds of alarm which induced Walpole, though not to approve the proceedings in all reſpects, yet to juſtify and to ſupport the treaty in parliament.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-NINTH:

1725—1727.

The King's dangerous Paſſage to England.—The Treaty of Hanover approved by Parliament, and vigorous Meaſures adopted.—Public Indignation againſt the Emperor.—Walpole's pacific Views.—Preliminaries agreed to by the Emperor—and Spain.—The King departs for Hanover.

The king's dangerous paſſage to England.

THE preſence of the king being now neceſſary in England, for the purpoſe of laying the treaty before parliament, he quitted Hanover on the 29th of December, after a ſhort ſtay in Holland, embarked at Helvoetſluys, on the 1ſt of January, O. S. at one in the afternoon; and after a violent ſtorm, which continued three days, during which he was expoſed to imminent danger, he landed on the 3d at Rye. To the king's eſcape, the author of the Night Thoughts alludes in his ſeventh Satire, which concludes with a high eulogium on Sir Robert Walpole.

> While ſea and air, great Brunſwick! ſhook our ſtate,
> And ſported with our king's and kingdom's fate,
> Depriv'd of what ſhe lov'd, and preſs'd by fear
> Of ever loſing what ſhe held moſt dear;
> How did Britannia, like Achilles weep,
> And tell her ſorrows to the kindred deep!

Hang

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Hang o'er the floods, and, in devotion warm, Chapter 29.
Strive, for thee, with the ſurge, and fight the ſtorm! 1725 to 1727
What felt thy Walpole, pilot of the realm!
Our Palinurus ſlept not at the helm.
His eyes ne'er cloſed, long ſince enured to wake,
And outwatch every ſtar for Brunſwick's ſake:
By thwarting paſſions toſt, by cares oppreſt,
He found the tempeſt pictur'd in his breaſt.
But *now*, what joys that gloom of heart diſpel,
No powers of language—but his *own* can tell;
His own, which *nature* and the *graces* form,
At will to raiſe or hush the *civil* ſtorm.

The ſpeech from the throne was penned with great addreſs, and well calculated to produce an impreſſive effect. It ſtated, that the diſtreſſed condition of the proteſtants abroad, the engagements contracted by certain powers, which ſeemed to lay the foundation of new diſturbances in Europe, and to threaten his ſubjects with the loſs of their moſt advantageous trade, had obliged the king to conclude a defenſive alliance with France and Pruſſia, and to invite the States General and other powers to accede, with a view to ſecure their rights and privileges, and preſerve the peace and balance of Europe. It adverted to the machinations of the diſaffected party in favour of the Pretender; and after urging the neceſſity of placing the kingdom in a poſture of defence, concluded in the true ſpirit of the preventive and pacific ſyſtem adopted by the miniſter. "When the world ſhall ſee, that you will not ſuffer the Britiſh crown and nation to be menaced and inſulted, thoſe, who moſt envy the preſent happineſs and

January 20th 1726. Speech from the throne.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727. tranquillity of this kingdom, and are endeavouring to make us ſubſervient to their ambition, will conſider their own intereſt and circumſtances, before they make any attempt upon ſo brave a people, ſtrengthened and ſupported by prudent and powerful alliances; and, though deſirous to preſerve the peace, able and ready to defend themſelves againſt the efforts of all aggreſſors. Such reſolutions, and ſuch meaſures, timely taken, I am ſatisfied are the moſt effectual means of preventing a war, and continuing to us the bleſſings of peace and proſperity *."

Pulteney in oppoſition. Addreſſes, in conformity with the ſpeech, were preſented by both houſes, to ſupport the king againſt all attempts to diſturb the public repoſe: And the commons immediately proceeded to conſider of a ſupply. On the propoſal for continuing the ſame number of men as were maintained in the January 28th. laſt year, a motion of Shippen, to reduce the 4,000 men, was negatived without a diviſion, and the ori- February 9th. ginal queſtion carried. Another being made by Pulteney for a committee to ſtate the public debts, from 1714 to 1725, Walpole objected to it as unſeaſonable and prepoſterous, and calculated to give a dangerous wound to public credit, when the monied men were too much alarmed with the appearances of an approaching war; he urged, that in the preſent poſture of affairs, the commons could not better expreſs their love to their country, than by fulfilling their promiſes, and raiſing the neceſ-

* Journals. Chandler. Tindal.

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sary supplies, for the purpose of enabling the king to make good his late engagements, disappointing the hopes of the disaffected, and resenting any insults which might be offered to his crown and dignity. Barnard, member for London, having confirmed the statement of the minister, and observed that stocks had already fallen 12 or 14 per cent.; his remarks made a deep impression on the house; and the motion was negatived by 262 against 89. Chapter 29. 1725 to 1727.

The treaty of Hanover was presented to the house of commons by Sir Robert Walpole, but he did not take any active part on that occasion. The business of the day was principally supported by his brother Horace Walpole, who opened the debate with a very able speech, in which he gave a detail of the state of affairs in Europe, from the peace of Utrecht to that time; dwelt on the dangerous consequences which might result from the union of Spain and the Emperor, and endeavoured to prove the necessity of the treaty formed at Hanover, between England, France, and Prussia, as the only method of counteracting the ambitious designs of those two sovereigns, preserving the tranquillity of Europe, restoring the balance of power, and securing the trade and commerce of England. Treaty of Hanover approved. Feb. 16th, 1725-6.

The opposition, with great art, condemned the treaty, as being made solely with a view to Hanover, and as likely to engage the nation in a war for the defence of the king's dominions in Germany, contrary to the article in the act for limiting the crown in the Protestant line, which being the

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the baſis of the act of ſettlement, was become part of the conſtitution, and therefore ought to be held ſacred and inviolable. The objection was well anſwered by Henry Pelham, "That the true meaning and intent of that limitation, was not wholly and for ever to deprive his majeſty's foreign dominions of any aſſiſtance from this nation; for if ſo, the king in that reſpect would be in a worſe condition upon his acceſſion to the Britiſh throne, than he was before; but only to reſtrain the ſovereign for the future, from engaging the nation, at his pleaſure, in a war for the defence of any dominions not belonging to the crown of England, without the conſent of parliament, to whom the legiſlature wiſely left to judge and determine, whether ſuch a war was juſt and neceſſary or no? That for his own part he was fully of opinion, that if in the preſent juncture, his foreign dominions ſhould be attacked or inſulted, this nation ought to ſupport the king againſt all his enemies *."

The only ſhare Walpole took in this debate, was in reply to Pulteney, who ſuggeſted that the backwardneſs of the Emperor in granting the inveſtiture of Bremen and Verden, might have been one motive for the late meaſures; he obſerved, "that the king might long ago have received the inveſtiture, if he would have conſented to pay the exorbitant fees demanded on that occaſion." An addreſs, moved by Pelham, was carried in the affirmative, by 285 againſt 107; and the ſame triumphant ma-

* Chandler, vol. 6. p. 362.

jority

jority voted an extraordinary ſupply, an increaſe of ſeamen, and teſtified their hearty concurrence to ſupport government in the moſt vigorous meaſures. Chapter 29. 1725 to 1727.

This ſeſſion, in which ſcarcely any oppoſition was made to the meaſures of government, was cloſed on the 24th of May by prorogation; when the king, after returning his hearty thanks for their attention and zeal, and extolling their ſpirit and reſolution, concluded, "The conſtant employment of my thoughts, and the moſt earneſt wiſhes of my heart, tend wholly to the ſecuring to my ſubjects their juſt rights and advantages, and to the preſerving to them and to all Europe, the enjoyment of a ſafe and honourable peace: and I muſt not conclude without giving you the ſtrongeſt aſſurances, that the particular confidence you have placed in me, ſhall be made uſe of in ſuch a manner only, as may moſt effectually conduce to the attaining thoſe good and great purpoſes *." Prorogation of Parliament.

In conſequence of this effuſion of parliamentary zeal, the moſt active preparations for commencing or preventing hoſtilities were made, in concert with France. The firſt efforts were directed to the North, as to the point which appeared moſt dangerous and alarming. For it required no great penetration to foreſee, that if Ruſſia could either bribe or awe Sweden into compliance, Denmark would not be able to reſiſt the combination of theſe two powers. A Ruſſian ſquadron riding in the Vigorous preparations.

* Journals. Chandler. Tindal.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

port of Gothebourg, in conjunction with the Swediſh fleet, would keep Great Britain in continual alarms, by threatening her with an immediate invaſion, and be ready to co-operate with the Emperor and Spain. The golden ſhowers poured into Sweden from France and England, overcame the Holſtein and Ruſſian party, and Sweden prepared, on the firſt appearance of the Engliſh ſquadron, to renounce the alliance with Ruſſia, and to receive the Hanoverian allies with open arms. The ſquadron ſent to the Baltic under the command of Sir Charles Wager, effected the purpoſes for which it was equipped: it inſpired Denmark with confidence; enabled Sweden to recede from its alliance with Ruſſia, and to accede to the treaty of Hanover; it compelled the empreſs Catherine to renounce her hoſtile attempts in favour of the duke of Holſtein; and though ſhe afterwards concluded a formal alliance with the Emperor, yet it was not attended with any material effects. Threatened with an attack from the united arms of France, England, Sweden, Denmark, and Holland, who had acceded to the treaty of Hanover, and finding herſelf not likely to receive any effectual aſſiſtance from her ally the Emperor, who, though he had ſeduced Pruſſia from the Hanover allies, had been foiled in his attempts to gain the princes and circles of the empire; her impotent reſentment ſubſided at the near approach of danger, and her fleet quietly remained in her ports, without venturing to oppoſe the Britiſh ſquadron.

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Chapter 29. 1725 to 1727.

These vigorous measures in the North, which detached Sweden from Russia, and prevented all concert between the Emperor and Catherine, effected the most difficult part of the business, and were a prelude to the successful issue of the exertions against Spain and the Emperor. The haughty and restless ambition of Spain had roused the spirit of the British nation, but strong prejudices in favour of the house of Austria prevailed in England. The Emperor had many partisans, and even Walpole was inclined not to push matters vigorously against him, but the imprudence of the Emperor destroyed these favourable impressions.

Fall of Ripperda.

This year gave birth to two events of great importance, which occurred nearly at the same period, the fall of Ripperda, and the disgrace of the duke of Bourbon. The fall of Ripperda, of which a full account is given in a subsequent chapter, was unfavourable to the interests of England. On his disgrace, he took refuge in the house of the British embassador, where he was arrested by command of the king of Spain. Stanhope complained of the violation of the law of nations, and was warmly supported by the foreign ministers. The Spanish cabinet tendered excuses; memorials and counter memorials passed between the two courts; the misunderstanding was increased, and Philip made vast preparations by sea and land, which were evidently designed for the siege of Gibraltar *.

* Stanhope's dispatches.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727. June.

Diſgrace of the Duke of Bourbon.

The diſgrace of the duke of Bourbon was received at the courts of Madrid and Vienna with the higheſt tranſports of joy, as a ſure prelude to the ſeparation of France from England, and reconciliation with Spain. The elevation of Fleury was hailed by the Jacobites as the beginning of a new æra, and the certain forerunner of a ſucceſsful attempt to place the Pretender on the throne, by the united arms of France, Spain, and Auſtria. But the addreſs of Horace Walpole, who had ſecured his confidence, prevailed on the new miniſter to maintain the union, and to ratify the engagements ſpecified in the treaty of Hanover. While the oppoſition in England induſtriouſly circulated reports, that the cabinet was duped by Fleury, the French party hoſtile to his meaſures, and the queen of Spain, declared that Fleury was a coward, and wholly governed by that heretic Horace Walpole*.

Meeeing of parliament.

The parliament aſſembled the 17th of January 1727, and the king in his ſpeech from the throne obſerved, that he had received information from different parts, on which he could entirely depend, that the placing the Pretender upon the throne of this kingdom was one of the articles of the ſecret engagements; and if time ſhould evince, that the giving up the trade of this nation to one power, and Gibraltar and Port Mahon to another, is made the price and reward of impoſing upon this kingdom a Popiſh Pretender, what indignation muſt

* Horace Walpale's Apology. Walpole Papers.

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this raiſe in the breaſt of every proteſtant Briton*! This whole ſpeech is ſingularly full and explicit, and in length exceeds all others, which, ſince the revolution, had been delivered from the throne. The concluſion peculiarly animated and impreſſive: "If preſerving a due balance of power in Europe; if defending the poſſeſſions of the crown of Great Britain, of infinite advantage and ſecurity to our trade and commerce; if ſupporting that trade and commerce againſt dangerous and unlawful encroachments; and if the preſent eſtabliſhment, the religion, liberties, and properties of a proteſtant people, are any longer conſiderations worthy of the care and attention of a Britiſh parliament; I need ſay no more to incite my loyal and faithful houſes of parliament, to exert themſelves in the defence of all that is dear and valuable to them."

Zeal of parliament.

The zeal and indignation raiſed by this ſpeech was ſo great, that the addreſs of thanks was carried by a majority of 251 againſt 81; and the commons proved, that the warm terms in which they conveyed their approbation of the meaſures which had been purſued, were not confined to mere form. Twenty thouſand ſeamen were unanimouſly voted; the army was augmented to 26,000 men, and the ſupplies demanded for the ſervice of the current year, were voted without the leaſt oppoſition. The public indignation, excited by the peremptory demand of the reſtitution of Gibraltar, and the ſecret articles in the treaty of Vienna, which, according to the poſitive declarations of the king and his mi-

Indignation of the public.

* Tindal, vol. 19. p. 562. Journals.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

niſters, related to the Pretender, was ſtill farther increaſed by the imprudent conduct of Palm, the Imperial miniſter at London. Caballing with the Hanoverian miniſters, and confiding in the counſels of oppoſition, he adviſed the Emperor, in a letter which fell into the hands of the miniſters, to make a public declaration, that the aſſertions contained in the ſpeech were falſe *.

Imprudence of the Emperor.

Guided by this imprudent advice, the Emperor, who was wholly unacquainted with the principles of the Engliſh conſtitution, ordered Palm to preſent a memorial to the king. In this memorial, the Imperial miniſter, after reflecting on the ſpeech, and after denying, in his maſter's name, in the moſt ſolemn manner, the exiſtence of any ſecret articles, concluded in theſe words: "Which things being thus, the injury offered to truth, the honour and dignity of his ſacred Imperial and Catholic majeſty require, that they ſhould be expoſed to your majeſty, to the kingdom of Great Britain, and to the whole world: and his ſacred Imperial majeſty demands that reparation which is due to him by all manner of right, for the great injuries which have been done him by theſe many imputations †."

This memorial was printed and circulated, and was accompanied with a letter from the Imperial chancellor, count Zinzendorff, enjoining Palm to publiſh it, that the whole nation might be acquainted with it ‡. The intemperate language uſed in theſe papers, and the indiſcretion of diſtinguiſhing between the king and his ſubjects, and of appealing

* Correſpondence. † Tindal, vol. 19. p. 576. ‡ Hiſt. Regiſter.

from

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from the throne to the nation, excited the juſt reſentment of parliament. The memorial being ſubmitted to the houſe of commons, not only thoſe who ſupported government, but even Pulteney, Sir William Wyndham, Shippen, and the leading members in oppoſition, agreed in expreſſing the higheſt indignation at this affront offered to the crown, and ſtrongly reprobated the audacity of the Imperial miniſter. The whole houſe unanimouſly adopted the addreſs drawn up by Walpole, "To expreſs the higheſt reſentment at the affront and indignity offered to his moſt ſacred majeſty, by the memorial delivered by Monſieur de Palm, the Emperor's reſident, and at his inſolence in printing and diſperſing the ſame throughout the kingdom; to declare their utmoſt abhorrence of this audacious manner of appealing to the people againſt his majeſty; and their deteſtation of the preſumptuous and vain attempt of endeavouring to inſtil into the minds of any of his majeſty's faithful ſubjects, the leaſt diſtruſt or diffidence in his moſt ſacred royal word; to return his majeſty the thanks of this houſe, for his care and vigilance, in diſcovering the ſecret and pernicious deſigns of his enemies, and his goodneſs in communicating to his parliament the dangers that threatened this kingdom; and to aſſure his majeſty, that the houſe would ſtand by and ſupport him againſt all open and ſecret enemies, both at home and abroad; and effectually defeat the expectations of all ſuch as may have in any manner countenanced, encouraged, or abetted the diſturbers of the public tranquillity in this ex-

Unanimous addreſs to the king. March 13th.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

travagant inſult upon his majeſty, or flattered them with hopes, that an obſtinate perſeverance in their deſtructive meaſures, could ſtagger the firmneſs of the Britiſh nation, in vindication of his majeſty's honour, and the defence of their rights and privileges *."

Imperial miniſter diſmiſſed.

Soon after the preſentation of this addreſs, Palm was commanded to leave the kingdom; the Britiſh reſident at Vienna quitted the Imperial dominions; and as the Spaniſh miniſter had previouſly taken an abrupt departure, a rupture with Spain and the Emperor appeared to be unavoidable. The moſt active preparations were made on all ſides; Spain commenced hoſtilities by the ſiege of Gibraltar, and expected to be ſeconded by the whole force of the houſe of Auſtria. A bloody war would have been the conſequence of this attack, had the Emperor fulfilled the treaty of Vienna; or had England and France inſtantly directed their whole force againſt the reſtleſs and ambitious court of Madrid. Fortunately, the pacific ſentiments of Walpole and Fleury began to operate on the affairs of Europe, and the government of England exhibited a ſtriking inſtance of vigour and moderation; of vigour in the preparations for war, and of moderation in ſuſpending the blow, at the very moment in which it was ready to ſtrike with effect.

Pacific views of Walpole.

Walpole dreaded the interruption of our commerce with Spain, which at that time formed the moſt extenſive branches of the national trade, and with that view ſtrained every nerve to infuſe ſenti-

* Journals. Chandler.

ments

ments of reconciliation into the British cabinet. Hence the instructions * of admiral Hosier, who had been sent on an expedition to the Spanish West Indies, enjoined him in the strongest manner not to commit hostilities; hence England also declined the offer of France to consider the attack of Gibraltar as a *casus fœderis*, from an apprehension lest the warlike interposition of France should contribute to the diffusion of hostilities; hence notwithstanding the insult offered to the king and nation by the Emperor, through the medium of his minister, overtures of accommodation were gladly received through the mediation of France. Chapter 29. 1725 to 1727.

When the Emperor so grossly insulted the king and the nation by the memorial of Palm, he conceived the most sanguine expectations of having formed a confederacy strong enough to oppose the allies of Hanover. He had seduced the king of Prussia from the treaty of Hanover; he had already gained the electors of Mentz, Treves, Cologne, and Palatine; secured the neutrality of the Saxons, and even prevailed on the duke of Brunswic Wolfenbuttle, to admit an Austrian garrison into Brunswic, from whence he might easily make an irruption into Hanover. He had concluded a strict alliance with the Czarina, and collected an army of 30,000 men, ready to march from the Netherlands to the invasion of Holland.

But the measures adopted in opposition to these hostile designs, disconcerted his views; 20,000 Danes, and 12,000 Swedes, were subsidised by Eng- Separate peace with the Emperor.

* Walpole Papers.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

land and France; 12,000 Heſſians taken into Engliſh pay; and a French army was collecting on the frontiers of Germany. The death of the Czarina, in May, deprived the Emperor of a powerful ally; the king of Pruſſia began to waver; the princes and circles of Germany refuſed to conſider the cauſe of the houſe of Auſtria as the cauſe of the empire; and as the king of Spain was unable to ſupply him with thoſe large ſums of money, which the unbounded promiſes of Ripperda had led him to expect, Charles found himſelf unable to reſiſt the powerful combination againſt him. He ſacrificed Spain to his own ſafety; and after a ſhort negotiation, commenced by the Pope, and continued through the mediation of France, he ſigned at Paris, on the 31ſt of May, in his own name, and in that of Spain, the preliminaries of peace with England, France, and Holland. He agreed to ſuſpend the charter of the Oſtend company for ſeven years; confirmed all the treaties in force anterior to 1725, and conſented to ſubmit to a general congreſs the termination of the diſputes ſubſiſting between the allies of Hanover and Vienna.

1727.

Spain forced to accede.

Philip the Fifth having, in conſequence of his diſagreement with France, no miniſter at Paris, the preliminaries were ſigned at Vienna in the beginning of June, by the duke of Bournonville, the Spaniſh embaſſador; the fifth article declaring that they ſhould be executed immediately after the ſignature by the Emperor and the allies, and by Spain eight days after the king of Spain had received them ſigned. In conſequence of this agreement,

George

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George the Firſt iſſued orders to lord Portmore, governor of Gibraltar, and his admirals, both on the coaſts of Spain, and in the Weſt Indies, to ceaſe all hoſtilities, and to reſtore all prizes taken from Spain; to permit the return of the galleons to Europe, and to raiſe the blockade of Porto Bello, and the other ports in the Weſt Indies. In return, it was expected that the ſiege of Gibraltar would be raiſed, and the prizes taken from England, particularly the Prince Frederick, belonging to the South Sea company, at Vera Cruz, would be reſtored.

On proroguing the parliament, the king obſerved, in his ſpeech from the throne, in a language which breathed the pacific ſentiments of Walpole, "The ſiege of Gibraltar proves, beyond all diſpute, the aim and deſign of the engagements entered into by the Emperor and the king of Spain; but the preparations I had made for the defence of that place, and the bravery of my troops, will, I doubt not, convince them of the raſhneſs and folly of that undertaking. However the love of peace has hitherto prevailed on me, even under this high provocation, to ſuſpend, in ſome meaſure, my reſentments; and inſtead of having immediate recourſe to arms, and demanding of my allies that aſſiſtance, which they are engaged and ready to give me, I have concurred with the moſt Chriſtian king, and the States General, in making ſuch overtures of accommodation, as muſt convince all the world of the uprightneſs of our intentions, and of our ſincere diſpoſition to peace; and demonſtrate, to whoſe ambition and thirſt of power the calamities of a war

May 15.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

are to be imputed, if these just and reasonable propositions are rejected. In the mean time, I have the pleasure to acquaint you, that the crown of Sweden has acceded to the treaty of Hanover, and the convention between me, his most Christian majesty, and the king of Denmark, is actually signed*." Such was the state of the negotiation, when the king departed for Hanover, in June 1727.

The king's departure for Hanover.

CHAPTER THE THIRTIETH;

1727.

Cabals of the Duchess of Kendal and Bolingbroke to remove Walpole.—Bolingbroke's Interview with the King.—Sanguine Hopes of Opposition.—Death of the King.—Memoirs of his Wife, the unfortunate Sophia of Zell.

Cabals against Walpole.

At this period, Walpole stood in the highest estimation with the king and nation; and his pacific sentiments were so well known, that all who desired the blessing of peace, wished for his continuance in office; yet rumours of a change in administration were believed and circulated; and a formal attempt was made by Bolingbroke, in co-operation with the duchess of Kendal, to obtain his removal, and to substitute himself in his place. A full account of this intrigue, which has occasioned various conjectures and uncertain speculations, is here given from undoubted authorities.

* Journals. Chandler.

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The duchess of Kendal, who, by the death of lady Darlington, remained without a rival in the confidence of the king, had, in consideration of £. 11,000, assured lord Bolingbroke that she would obtain his complete restoration*; but having failed in effecting her promise, she threw the whole blame on Sir Robert Walpole, as the person who obstructed the king's designs in his favour; and though she was inclined to second all attempts for the purpose of obtaining his disgrace, yet many circumstances prevented her from exerting her influence in favour of Bolingbroke. Chapter 30. 1727. By the duchess of Kendal and Bolingbroke.

She was become timid and cautious; fearful of distressing the mind of the king, who was declining in years and health, and easily depressed. She was unwilling to offend the ministers, who, besides the payment of a pension of £. 7,500 from the exchequer, which it depended on their punctuality to discharge, secured her good-will by private presents, and supplied her with various means of gratifying her rapaciousness. She affected great concern for the interest of England, and sacrificed to her own tranquillity the concerns of the Hanoverian junto. Under these circumstances, it was no easy task to rouse her active exertions; but Bolingbroke paid assiduous court; his wife was no less constant in her attendance, and both anxiously watched for a favourable opportunity, which at length seemed to present itself.

The eldest son of Sir Robert Walpole had been appointed ranger of Richmond Park, and the minister The king's convivial intercourse with Walpole.

* Chapter 25.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

niſter, while a new lodge was building, took a ſmall tenement on Richmond Hill, where the king after ſhooting, occaſionally dined with him, and paſſed the afternoon drinking punch, of which he was exceſſively fond, in an eaſy and convivial manner. The ducheſs, alarmed at this familiar intercourſe, and anxious to render theſe viſits leſs frequent, attempted, by means of ſome of her German friends, who were generally of the party, to break up the meeting ſooner than the uſual time of retiring; but their attempts having no effect, the ducheſs liſtened to the overtures of Bolingbroke, who artfully fomented her jealouſy againſt Sir Robert Walpole, and prevailed on her to ſecond his efforts.

Bolingbroke's audience with the king.

He drew up a long memorial, full of invectives againſt the miniſter, which the ducheſs of Kendal ſecretly delivered to the king. After ſtating in various inſtances the miſconduct of adminiſtration, he concluded, by requeſting an audience, and undertook to demonſtrate that the kingdom muſt inevitably be ruined, ſhould Sir Robert Walpole continue at the head of the treaſury. The king put this memorial into the hands of the miniſter, who concluded, that the perſon who conveyed it, could not be ignorant of the contents: after ſome inquiry, he traced it to the ducheſs of Kendal, who, on being interrogated, acknowledged that ſhe had delivered it, and attempted to juſtify her conduct by frivolous excuſes. Walpole in reply, only entreated her as a favour, to ſecond the inſtances of Bolingbroke, and to procure for him that audience which

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which he so earnestly solicited. The duchess, after several endeavours to excuse herself, promised compliance; and at a proper interval, Walpole besought the king to grant an audience to Bolingbroke; and urged the propriety, by observing, that if this request was rejected, much clamour would be raised against him for keeping the king to himself, and for permitting none to approach his person who might tell unwelcome truths. Chapter 30. 1727.

The king declined complying in so positive a manner, that Walpole could not venture to press it any farther in person; but waited on the duchess to renew his application. He found lady Bolingbroke on a visit, and when she retired, was informed, that the king was unwilling to admit Bolingbroke, on a supposition that it would make him uneasy. Walpole repeated his earnest entreaties, and declared that he could not be easy, until the audience was granted. These pressing solicitations finally had their effect; and Bolingbroke was admitted into the closet.

While Walpole was attending in an adjoining apartment, lord Letchmere came, and demanded admission for the signature of papers, which he had brought as chancellor of the duchy of Cornwall. He was informed that Bolingbroke was with the king, and that Walpole was also waiting. In the midst of his surprise, Bolingbroke coming out, Letchmere instantly rushed into the closet, and without making any apology, or entering upon his own business, burst out into the most violent invectives against Walpole, whom he reviled as not contented

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Period III. 1720 to 1727.

contented with doing miſchief himſelf, but as having introduced one who was, if poſſible worſe than himſelf, to be his aſſiſtant. The king, delighted with this miſtake, calmly aſked him, if he would undertake the office of prime miniſter. Letchmere made no reply, but continued pouring forth his invectives, and finally departed without having offered any of the papers to ſign. Walpole found the king ſo highly diverted and occupied with this incident, that it was ſome time before he had an opportunity of inquiring the ſubject of Bolingbroke's converſation. The king ſlightly anſwered, "*Bagatelles, bagatelles.*"

Produces no effect.

Thus was this formidable attack defeated by the prudence and firmneſs of the miniſter; the king continued his confidential viſits, and on his departure for Hanover, ordered him to have the lodge in Richmond Park finiſhed againſt his return *.

Vague rumours on the ſubject.

Such is the account of this extraordinary tranſaction, given by Walpole himſelf †; yet other reports have been circulated, which deſerve conſideration. Bolingbroke ſo confidently and repeatedly aſſerted, that on the king's return from Hanover, he ſhould be appointed miniſter, that this opinion obtained belief, not only from his friends and partiſans, but from others who were leſs inimical to the miniſter, and leſs deſirous of his fall. Swift expreſſes his hopes on the ſubject, with his uſual freedom, in a letter to Dr. Sheridan, May 13th,

* From Lord Orford.

† Etough's Minutes of a Converſation with Sir Robert Walpole in September 1727. Correſpondence.

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1727; and Atterbury drew up a memorial to cardinal Fleury, in which he treated the fall of the miniſter as a certain event. Pelham alſo told ſpeaker Onſlow *, that at this period, Walpole was ſo convinced of Bolingbroke's intended elevation, as to have adopted the reſolution of reſigning and accepting a peerage, but was deterred by the remonſtrances of the duke of Devonſhire, and the repreſentations of the princeſs of Wales, who diſſuaded him from accepting an office which would incapacitate him for taking his accuſtomed lead in the houſe of commons. Chapter 30. 1727.

On the other hand, Horace Walpole, lady Walſingham, and the ducheſs of Kendal herſelf, in a converſation with Sir Matthew Decker, aſſerted that the king did not intend to diſmiſs Walpole. It is not difficult, however, to reconcile theſe contradictory reports. It was natural for Bolingbroke to propagate an opinion tending to exalt his own importance; it is probable that Walpole, in a peeviſh moment of diſſatisfaction, might have expreſſed a reſolution of retiring; and the whole account might poſſibly have received its greateſt authority from Walpole's own declaration, that knowing the venality of the ducheſs of Kendal, her aſcendancy over the king, and the influence of Bolingbroke over her, he was not without apprehenſions that her efforts might have finally ſucceeded.

The king departed for Hanover on the 3d of June; he enjoyed perfect health till he arrived at Delden. Death of the king.

* Onſlow's Remarks. Correſpondence, Period IV.

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Period III. 1720 to 1727. Delden. He was entertained by the count de Twittel, at a country houſe about twenty miles from that town. The king eat ſome melons after ſupper, which probably cauſed the indigeſtion of which he died. He returned that evening to Delden, and ſet out early the next morning, after having breakfaſted on a cup of chocolate. On his arrival at Bentheim, the king felt himſelf indiſpoſed, but continued his journey in oppoſition to the repeated entreaties of his ſuite. His indiſpoſition increaſed, and when he arrived at Ippenburen, he was quite lethargic; his hand fell down as if lifeleſs, and his tongue hung out of his mouth. He gave, however, ſigns of life, by continually crying out, as well as he could articulate, Oſnabrug, Oſnabrug. This impatience to reach Oſnabrug, induced the attendants not to ſtop at Ippenburen, but to haſten on, in hopes of arriving at that city before he died. But it was too late. The exact time and place of his death cannot be aſcertained; but it is moſt probable, that he expired either as the carriage was aſcending the hill near Ippenburen, or on the ſummit. On their arrival at the palace of his brother, the biſhop of Oſnabrug, he was immediately bled, but all attempts to recover him proved ineffectual *. A courier had been diſpatched to the ducheſs of Kendal, who had remained at Delden, with the account of the king's dangerous ſituation; he met her on

June 10-21.

* For this account of the king's death, I am indebted to my friend Nathaniel W. Wraxall, eſquire, who obtained it from perſons at Hanover and Oſnabrug, who recollected the event.

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the road, about two miles the other side of the Rhine; but as she was listening to another courier announced his death. She beat her breast, tore her hair, and gave signs of extreme grief; and then dismissing the English ladies who accompanied her, took the road to Brunswic, where she continued three months *. Chapter 3. 1727.

Lord Townshend, who was on his journey to Hanover, repaired instantly to Osnabrug, where he arrived on the 22d, early in the morning; but finding the king demised, he wrote a letter † of condolence and congratulation to the new sovereign, and taking post, pursued his journey to England.

Before I conclude the reign of George the First, one remarkable fact must not be omitted: As the king could not readily speak English, nor Sir Robert Walpole French, the minister was obliged to deliver his sentiments in Latin; and as neither could converse in that language with readiness and propriety, Walpole was frequently heard to say, that during the reign of the first George, he governed the kingdom by means of bad latin ‡. It is a matter of wonder, that under such disadvan-

* The duchess of Kendal was sister of Frederic Achatius, count of Schulenburgh and Hedlen. Petronelle Melesina, countess of Walsingham, who afterwards married the earl of Chesterfield, was supposed to be her daughter by George the First, though she was considered as her niece. The duchess returned to England, and died in 1743 at a very advanced age. She principally resided at Kendal House, Isleworth, which was after her death converted into a tea garden. Her immense property was divided amongst her German relations, and the countess of Chesterfield.

† Sir Cyril Wich to Stephen Poyntz, June 27, 1727. Correspondence. Lord Townshend to the king.

‡ From lord Orford.

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tages, the king ſhould take pleaſure in tranſacting buſineſs with him; a circumſtance principally owing to the method and perſpicuity of his calculations, and to the extreme facility with which he arranged and explained the moſt abſtruſe and difficult combinations of finance.

Memoirs of Sophia of Zell.

It has been already obſerved, that George the Firſt had, by a left-handed marriage, eſpouſed the ducheſs of Kendal, though his real wife, the unfortunate Sophia Dorothy, was ſtill alive. Sophia was the only child of William duke of Zell, by Eleanor d'Emiers, of the houſe of Olbreuſe, in France; ſhe was born in 1666, and her hand was courted by the moſt powerful princes of Germany. His father Erneſt Auguſtus having once deſigned him for the princeſs Anne, afterwards queen of England; he actually went to England to pay his addreſſes, and was well received and approved by the whole court. But he was recalled by his father who had ſuddenly concluded a match for him with his couſin.

Sophia, at the time of their marriage, was only ſixteen years of age, and was a princeſs of great perſonal charms and mental endowments*; yet her attractions did not retain the affections of her huſband. After ſhe had brought him a ſon and a daughter, he neglected his amiable conſort, and attached himſelf to a favourite miſtreſs.

Such was the ſituation of Sophia, when count Konigſmark, a Swediſh nobleman, arrived at Hanover. He was a man of a good figure, and pro-

* Rimius.

feſſed

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feſſed gallantry; had been formerly enamoured of Sophia at Zell, and was ſuppoſed to have made ſome impreſſion on her heart. On the ſight of her, his paſſion, which had been diminiſhed by abſence, broke out with increaſing violence; he had the imprudence publicly to renew his attentions; and as George was abſent at the army, made his ſolicitations with redoubled ardour. Information of his attachment, and of his ſucceſs, was conveyed to Erneſt Auguſtus; and one evening, as the count came out of her apartment, and was croſſing a paſſage, he was put to death by perſons placed to intercept him, in the preſence of the elector; and tradition ſtill marks the ſpot where this aſſaſſination was committed. Sophia was immediately put under arreſt; and though ſhe ſolemnly proteſted her innocence; yet circumſtances ſpoke ſtrongly againſt her.

George, who never loved his wife, gave implicit credit to the account of her infidelity, as related by his father; conſented to her impriſonment, and obtained from the eccleſiaſtical conſiſtory, a divorce, which was paſſed on the 28th of December 1694. And even her father, the duke of Zell, who doated on his only daughter, does not ſeem to have entertained any doubts of her guilt; for he continued upon the ſtricteſt terms of friendſhip with Erneſt Auguſtus, and his ſon-in-law.

The unfortunate Sophia was confined in the caſtle of Alden, ſituated on the ſmall river Aller, in the duchy of Zell. She terminated her miſe-

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Period III. 1720 to 1727. rable exiſtence, after a long captivity of thirty-two years, on the 13th of November 1726, in the ſixty-firſt year of her age, only ſeven months before the death of George the Firſt; and ſhe was announced in the Gazette, under the title of the Electreſs Dowager of Hanover.

During her whole confinement, ſhe behaved with no leſs mildneſs than dignity; and on receiving the ſacrament once every week, never omitted on that awful occaſion, making the moſt ſolemn aſſeverations, that ſhe was not guilty of the crime laid to her charge. Subſequent circumſtances have come to light, which appear to juſtify her memory; and reports are current at Hanover, that her character was baſely defamed, and that ſhe fell a ſacrifice to the jealouſy and perfidy of the counteſs of Platen, favourite miſtreſs of Erneſt Auguſtus. Being enamoured of count Konigſmark, who ſlighted her overtures, jealouſy took poſſeſſion of her breaſt: ſhe determined to ſacrifice both the lover and the princeſs to her vengeance, and circumſtances favoured her deſign.

The prince was abſent at the army; Erneſt Auguſtus was a man of warm paſſions and violent temper, eaſily irritated, and when irritated, incapable of controul. Sophia herſelf had treated count Konigſmark with regard and attention, and the lover was hot-headed, ſelf-ſufficient, priding himſelf on his perſonal accompliſhments, and accuſtomed to ſucceed in affairs of gallantry.

Thoſe who exculpate Sophia, aſſert either that a common viſit was conſtrued into an act of criminality;

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nality; or that the countess of Platen, at a late hour, summoned count Konigsmark in the name of the princess, though without her connivance; that on being introduced, Sophia was surprised at his intrusion; that on quitting the apartment, he was discovered by Ernest Augustus, whom the countess had placed in the gallery, and was instantly assassinated by persons whom she had suborned for that purpose. Chapter 30. 1729.

It is impossible, at this distance of time, to discover and trace the circumstances of this mysterious transaction, on which no person at the court of Hanover durst at that time deliver his opinion. But the sudden murder of count Konigsmark may be urged as a corroboration of this statement: for had his guilt, and that of Sophia been unequivocal, would he not have been arrested and brought to a trial for the purpose of proving their connection, and confronting him with the unfortunate princess?

Many persons of credit at Hanover have not scrupled, since the death of Ernest Augustus and George the First, to express their belief that the imputation cast on Sophia was false and unjust. It is also reported, that her husband having made an offer of reconciliation, she gave this noble and disdainful answer of haughty virtue, unconscious of stain: "If what I am accused of is true, I am unworthy of his bed; and if my accusation is false, he is unworthy of me; I will not accept his offers."

George the Second, who doated on his mother, was fully convinced of her innocence. He once made

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made an attempt to see her, and even crossed the Aller on horseback, opposite to the Castle, but was prevented from having an interview by the baron de Bulow, to whose care the Elector, her husband, had committed her. Had she survived his accession, he intended to restore her to liberty, and acknowledge her as queen dowager. Her memory was so dear to him, that he secretly kept her portrait in his possession: and the morning after the news of the death of George the First had reached London, Mrs. Howard observed (in the antichamber of the king's apartment) a picture of a woman in the electoral robes, which proved to be that of Sophia.

George the Second told queen Caroline, that in making some repairs in the palace of Hanover, the bones of count Konigsmark were found under the floor of the antichamber which led to the apartment of Sophia. The queen mentioned this fact to Sir Robert Walpole*, and in various conversations which she held on this subject, she appeared fully convinced of her innocence; an opinion which the minister † himself constantly adhered to.

* From lord Orford.

† The account of Sophia of Zell, is derived from the MS. Journal of N. W. Wraxall, Esq; Etough's Papers, and various communication, which I received at Hanover, and Polnitz's Memoirs. A pretended history is published under the title of *Histoire secrete de la Duchesse d'Hanovre, Epouse de George Premier, Roi de la Grande Bretagne. Les malheurs de cette infortunée princesse, sa prison au Chateau d'Ahler où elle a fini ses jours; ses intelligences secrettes avec le comte de Konigsmark, assassiné à ce sujet*, which is a mere romance.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

Printed by Luke Hansard, Great Turnstile, Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

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ERRATUM.

Page 364. *for* claiming the promise, *read* claiming the fulfilment of the promise.

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